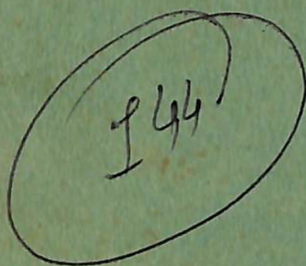
Meher Baba—
The Awakener

BY

Dr. C. D. DESHMUKH, M.A., Ph.D.



FOREWORD BY

PRINCESS NORINA MATCHABELLI

Sh. Hem Raj Sawhney

MEHER BABA—
THE AWAKENER

Mohan Lal Kaul.
— for service

Kamla ji
Kaul ——— for family
~~way~~.

Kamla Devi Kilam
Raja Rani — for peacefull
atmosphere.

Nanijee
Rupa Krishan Koton — health

Rupa [illegible] Kave

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INTRODUCTION

This Book, *Meher Baba—The Awakener,* by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, M.A., Ph.D., Lecturer in Philosophy, Morris College, Nagpur, contains in Part I and Part III the reprint of the original text of Dr. Deshmukh's *My Master and His Teaching* and in Part II, a collection of articles from the *Meher Baba Journal,* 1938–39. The article on *Meher Baba and the World Crisis* is an abstract of lectures delivered in Central Provinces, Bombay Presidency and the Mysore State.

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Bangalore.

PUBLISHING COMMITTEE,
Meher Baba Universal Centre.

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FOREWORD

This book is helpful and important inasmuch as it brings pure evidence of the real experience of those who have come to know and understand MEHER BABA'S life and his work. The Author's impersonal unselfish standpoint is a proof of a real balance between head and heart. Such right thinking from the Eastern standpoint may serve as an example to the Western mind. I am proud to add to this enlightening book my devotional contribution to serve the Cause of the Beloved Master whose Grace has awakened my 'knowing-feeling'.

New York,
1*st January* 1936.

NORINA MATCHABELLI.

TO ALL WHO SEEK LIGHT AND LIFE

We want the world's *New Awakening.*

We want the world to be without dispute.

We want tolerance.

We want selfless design in life.

We want union between mind and heart.

We are groping in the dark and want to be awakened.

We want the revelation of the Truth.

We want one whose Self is unclouded, and who can impart to us the experience of the Divine Heart.

The sum total of *all conclusion* has to be shown forth to us by one who is One-in-All and yet human.

We want the NEW SPIRITUAL MESSENGER whose Love shall awaken the Soul.

MEHER BABA is the NEW SPIRITUAL MESSENGER.

He imparts the Light in Silence and in Action.

When the God in man becomes conscious of his being the *One-in-All,* there is an unfoldment of Pure Love; and the execution of the Divine Plan in the Universe receives a tremendous momentum.

MEHER BABA is God-realised.

Awakening the Soul is his One-ward act of Mercy.

He wills the *liberation* of Life.

He is the Incarnation of that One, which *is* and *was* and *will be* the One.

He is the good example.

He is the selfless joining link between the finite and the Infinite.

The life we lead is unselfish when it is drawn close to him.

We need him to realise the One, by uniting our own will with the Divine will.

Our salvation is in the union of the finite with the Infinite.
He leads us towards the attainment of the Infinite.

***

We must know in our inner and outer striving that purity in experience is a real possibility.
In MEHER BABA the ideal is *realised*.
Who else is pure, if not the one whose very presence is purifying?
What is *Perfection,* if not the *spontaneous* expression of *understanding?*
What is true understanding, if not the knowledge of *Reality?*
What is Reality if not the One, that *is* and *was* and ever *will be* the One?
He arouses in us the unquestioning certainty that we are that One.
He makes us realise that the appearance of good and bad is all one pure progression of the Good.
The conflict of forces which we resent is ultimately in tune with the One.
The play of life in the multiform pattern of Manifestation is a harmony of the One.
All inner and outer Experience is a creation in lure of the One.
We are uncertain in our One-ward struggle, and he gives us strength.
By throwing away the design of the Ego, we become *Understanding.*
We cannot have both the Ego and the Infinite One.
We have to *choose;* and he teaches us *how* to choose.
In the harsh Ego, troubled by duality, he creates "knowing order".
He teaches inner and outer co-operation.
His work is constantly acting *Help.*

***

We have to be as he is—*One in tune with the many.*
He is a perfect revelation of the One.
The One which he reveals is *prior* to the self.
The day will come when he will manifest the One to those whose outward mind is darkened by ignorance and lonesome within, and whose heart is devoid of Love.
He has already manifested himself to some.
His act of *Grace* is constant fulfilment.
He is the manifold experience of Love in the many.
His final lure to draw us unto the One is *Love.*
His Divine work is done through pure Inspiration.
He shall create us equal to himself.
The will to serve him arouses within, a calm and steadfast desire to consume our self in order to realise the One.
Men and women of all races, creeds, and nations have been drawn to him; and they have offered their lives for serving his Cause.
They call on him as the *father* to help the child, as the *mother* to feed the little one and as the *God-man* to guide their spiritual destiny.
Through him the Eternal One offers itself unto all.
That same One we shall realise.
Experience is the method of his supreme teaching.
He teaches us to feel the One in the midst of the discord of the many, to find strength in humility, and to have faith even when life does not seem to co-operate with the One.
Life is One; and it will render all unto the One.
It is the Law; it is the Cause; it is the End.
Life's devastating design is the realisation of the *One-All* through the conflict of *duality.*
The promise of the One to reveal itself in *all* is being fulfilled through life and death, since the dawn of creation.

Our lives have sprung into existence to realise this Divine Purpose.

What is the working Design in Creation?

What is the final goal of man's manifold desires?

To realise the One.

* * *

We want the One to be in our midst in life and in work with us.

We want him to be *Divine and human.*

We have found our God as man.

He offers his life to us to bring us the Light.

He has awakened the longing sigh for pure Resurrection.

Let us serve this Incarnation.

Be sure, reader of books and gospels, that you have to be awakened.

The time for awakening is *Now.*

The Master of Love and Wisdom has come.

He is for all.

He loves the world.

He cures the Soul through mercy.

He cures through *confidence* in your poor darkened Soul.

Entertain in your hearts the will to serve him, O men, O women, in this world of creative pain!

Pour out in the world's work your energy; and withdraw into the One your hearts.

Let us welcome sorrow for "the One-ward Outcome".

Let us know the joys in pain.

Let us express Life's pure will.

He will reveal the heart which is hidden within the work of Nature.

He will make us conscious of the *hidden purpose* in Life.

The force of Love which will thereby be released will be *creative.*

That release can be brought about only through our free will.

The teaching which he gives will enlighten our will; and he will lead us to the *Unfathomable One*.

The great fact which one calls God has to be experienced.

He will awaken in men a Love which is Divine and Universal.

That Love will renew all life; it will make men new; it will make men human; it will make life pure; it will redeem the world.

***

When we shape our interests with *knowledge* and Divine *inspiration*, we find *fulfilment*.

The One-ward high aspiration is the road to the One.

The world needs THE NEW PROPHET to awaken that understanding which will lead it to the One.

Co-operative work will beget *New Understanding*.

The man who now is in sorrow will know his Divinity.

MEHER BABA is *Truth-realised*.

He represents the One, that is, was, and ever will be the One.

He is the *Way* in our Time, in sorrow and in joy!

Man, unfathomable mystery, lower thy 'I'.

Man, uncontented show of joy, join in the One!

O Man in sorrow, let thy Soul take to wings and find thy *Liberation*.

God has always aroused what is His, since the day of creation.

We have to render unto God what belongs to God.

Let us all join, unite, and understand in the Divine inspiration.

NORINA MATCHABELLI.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MEHER BABA

MEHER BABA was born at Poona in 1894. His spiritual career begins with his momentous visit to Hazrat Babajan in 1911, when he was a student in Deccan College at Poona. This meeting brought about a spiritual transformation of his consciousness. In 1914, Meher Baba's absorption in Truth-Consciousness led to his being completely unconscious of the things of this world; and he remained in this state of unconsciousness for nine months. After this, he saw many saints and Masters until he met Shri Sadguru Upasani Maharaj who helped him to come to normal consciousness through a long period of seven years. In 1921, Meher Baba retaining his God-consciousness, regained his normal knowledge of the world and became a *Perfect Master*.

The early period of Meher Baba's life as a Master can be conveniently divided into three parts according to the places where he lived, *e.g.,* (1) The hut on the Ferguson College Road, Poona, (2) Manzil-e-Meem, at Dadar, Bombay and (3) Meherabad (Arangaon), Ahmednagar. The hut and the Manzil stay were devoted to the training of the Mandali for an arduous spiritual life, while at Meherabad a new colony was established. The most interesting features of the Meherabad Colony were (1) The Meher Charitable Hospital and Dispensary, (2) The Hazrat Babajan School and (3) Meher Ashram (a boarding house for students) one particular branch of which was meant for the spiritual awakening of selected candidates. Meher Baba also took personal interest in the upliftment of the depressed classes; and among the Hindu Mandali even the caste distinctions came to be abolished.

From July 10th, 1925, Meher Baba began to observe SILENCE, although the use of the present alphabet-board for communication came later in 1927. His silence continues

upto this day; and as has been well expressed by C. B. Purdom in his book, *The Perfect Master,* his silence serves the purpose of "concentrating the 'Libido'" and involves "more complete control over expression and a much more highly concentrated direction of psychic energies than is to be found by other means".

One of the most interesting characteristics of Meher Baba's life is that he frequently retires into seclusion and observes long fasts. In the beginning of 1929 he retired in seclusion in a cave in the Tiger Valley at Panchagani and later in the same year in a specially constructed hut at Harvan in Kashmir. In August 1932, he retired in a cave at Assissi which is closely associated with the name of St. Francis and in January 1933, in a room of a Buddhist Temple at Bandarawella (Ceylon), and again in July 1934, on a mountain at Zurich. In June 1935, he again retired in seclusion for six weeks, in a beautiful little cave on the hill Ambika on Mount Abu and even after his return to Meherabad the period of seclusion continued for several months. These periods of seclusion are periods of intensive spiritual working on the *higher planes.*

Meher Baba's several visits to the West caused a great stir in the intellectual circles as well as in the general public; and even in the West, he is a tremendous influence for hundreds of aspirants who love and follow him with unswerving faith. Wherever he went he was received with spontaneous enthusiasm and warm hearts. And further, apart from the visits of disciples like Nelhams and Sadhu Leik, a party of European disciples came to India in 1933 with the express purpose of coming into contact with him. In December 1936 as well as in January 1937, some other groups of American and European disciples, men and women, came to India to avail themselves of an arduous spiritual life under his guidance in the Meher Retreat of Nasik.

Every one may not be able to grasp the entire significance of Meher Baba's work on the higher planes, the special interest which he takes in the *'Masts'* or the God-intoxicated persons and his activities through his spiritual agents, who are dispersed in various countries. The various miracles and instances of healing performed by him will also yield their full significance only to those whom they directly affected. But the true significance of Meher Baba's Mission is not to be measured by such miracles. It is to be understood in the light of the *spiritual awakening* which he has given to many persons who have come into contact with him. In one of his interviews, he himself has said, "The only real miracle for a Perfect One is to make others Perfect too, to make them realise the infinite state, which he himself enjoys. Otherwise, miracles have nothing to do with Truth at all".

Since November 1938, one of the important activities connected with Meher Baba's work has been the conducting of the *Meher Baba Journal*. Between 1938–39 Meher Baba went on tour through Northern and Central India and visited many places of spiritual importance. The interesting feature about this tour was that the group of devotees who accompanied him had the opportunity to observe for themselves how *the unique spiritual status of Meher Baba is spontaneously recognised by all the real saints dispersed in the plains of India.* After this tour, Meher Baba has again become settled at Bangalore in order to bring into existence his scheme for the Universal Centre. Extensive lands have been purchased near the *Byramangala* Reservoir, two miles from Bidadi (Bangalore–Mysore route) and elaborate plans for the construction of the Ashram are in the process of being put into execution. The MEHER BABA UNIVERSAL CENTRE at Byramangala will henceforth be one of the most important centres for the spiritual activities in connection with the world-task of Meher Baba.

PART I

MY MASTER AND HIS TEACHING

MEETING THE MASTER

We are living in an age which is distracted by conflicting conceptions of life. They introduce a radical disharmony within the inner life. Our minds are divided because we do not perceive the Lasting Values. The way to peace lies through the renunciation of the false values and reorientation towards the true. However, intellectual dissertations and theoretical discourses do not carry us very far in finding the true values. They carry no conviction and frequently lead only to further confusion. What we, therefore, need for practical guidance is Teachers who exemplify the perfect life. The synthesis or harmony for which we are striving can only be attained in life. The Truth cannot be adequately described in words; but it can be *realised* in life. And for this purpose, there is nothing like meeting a Perfect Master. He teaches not by words alone, but by example. He proves the reality of the Ideal not merely by describing it, but by expressing it. He is therefore a greater source of inspiration than hundreds of books. It has been my good fortune to meet such a Perfect One in Sadguru Meher Baba.

There are a thousand ways by which the Master draws unto himself his disciples in order to put them on the Path. He never comes until the disciple is ready; but after the disciple is ready to profit by coming into contact with him, he never tarries for a moment.

Not very long ago when I was a research student in London, I first came to know about Meher Baba through a newspaper report in the *"Daily Herald"*. There was in it a very impressive photo of Baba and a brief account of the interview which he had given to the reporter. "Get rid

of aimlessness in life", he had said. As I looked at the photo, I found in his eyes just that assurance of Divine Guidance which I had been looking for. The expression of his eyes brought to me the tidings of the Truth—that far-off land unseen, where there is the final Realisation of the Eternal and Infinite Source and Goal of all life. The next thing, therefore, was to try to secure a personal interview with Meher Baba. I wrote to him to grant me the privilege of meeting him in person. But as he was to leave England for America within a few days, I could not meet him at that time. He, however, assured me through a letter that he would see me during his next visit to England. During the interval, I had an opportunity to read many of his articles on spiritual life; and even before meeting him *physically*, my heart *recognised* that I had established a real and effective contact with a *Perfect Master*. The Teachings of Shri Krishna, Lord Buddha and Jesus Christ came to me with a new significance. I felt convinced that although the verbal interpretation of these Teachings is within the reach of any earnest student, it is difficult to realise their true power and meaning without the *Grace* of a Perfect Master.

On the 8th of December 1932, it was my great privilege to have the holy *darshan* of the Beloved Master and sit at his sacred feet for spiritual instruction. It is impossible to put into words what it is to be in his holy presence. He radiates Love and happiness through his beautiful eyes and fascinating smile and raises the consciousness of those around him, so as to give them a glimpse into the *true values* of life. In his company, time ceases to be and one may have a taste of the Life Eternal. One cannot but be impressed by the poise of his mind, the warmth of his heart and the harmonious expression of his total personality. In him, there is *a perennial spring of purifying love.* And yet, in spite of the grandeur and perfection of his being, he never creates a sense of distance. His Love knows no

separateness and he addresses himself to the inmost being of his disciples.

In him, one can see fullness of life. Every look of his, every word and every act springs forth spontaneously and vibrates the Truth. Meeting Meher Baba has been the greatest experience of my life. *It is a great privilege to be initiated by him into the Path; and it is a great joy to be the recipient of his Love Divine.*

THE MAN

In the last chapter, I wrote about how I came to meet Meher Baba in December 1932. On this occasion, the purpose of his visit to England was solely to establish contact with genuine spiritual aspirants. In order to facilitate this, he deliberately avoided publicity in the press. His previous visit had been the occasion of a warm reception by the papers. The reference in bold lines to the *"Indian Messiah"* had caused a great stir in the public. And in order to ward off the rush of people, who merely wanted some new sensation, or who were merely curious, it was necessary to avoid publicity.

Addressing crowds indiscriminately can hardly be the proper technique for promoting the Sacred Cause for which the Master has come. Appealing to the mass-mind can only create a sensation which leaves no permanent effect. The only way of securing lasting results of permanent value is to appeal to the individual in his *lonely integrity.* He is then in a position to assimilate the spiritual instruction imparted to him.

The Master, therefore, prefers to address himself to each person not as a part of a great mass, but as an individual, who can think and feel for himself. He never makes any one feel unimportant, but sets himself to the supreme task

of bringing out the wealth hidden in his personality and releasing his latent capacities, so as to enable him to make his *creative contribution* to life. He draws to himself the earnest aspirant, awakens his mind, opens his heart and arouses in him that ceaseless search, which can only terminate with the attainment of the Goal of life.

Some of the new visitors of the Master feel that they would find it difficult to follow his mode of communication. Since he entered into silence, he has been using an *alphabetical board,* on which he spells out what he wishes to convey. But it is surprising how every one feels perfectly at home in following his communications. He talks to the soul *directly*; and the words which he uses are, as it were, incidental. And even with regard to the thought expressed, his manner of communication is extremely effective for imparting spiritual instruction, for it leaves for the visitor ample time to take in everything that he says.

What one longs for most is just to sit in the holy presence of the Master. It is like basking in the sun. From him there continually flow streams of life-giving Love. Such is the wonderful magic of his divine presence that as soon as the visitor sits face to face with him, there at once descends upon him a great calm; and even if he has had only a short interview, he is a changed man by the time it comes to an end.

This is the main characteristic which belongs to the teaching of one who derives his authority from *personal realisation.* In this wide world of ours, there are many "pandits", who can quote the scriptures and repeat outworn formulæ. But such prattling from book-knowledge lacks inspiration and carries with it no conviction. The teaching of a Perfect One, however, always carries *its own authority.* It does not need to be supported by external authority. It carries conviction because it is based upon experience. It is not so much the words uttered as the tremendous

personality of the speaker, which produces lasting results. Those, who derive their knowledge from books or tradition, usually cling to a particular formulation of the Truth. They cannot see the spirit behind the words; and as they lack true perception, their words are but empty sounds. The Teaching of a Perfect One is not bound by any such limitation. He can express himself in a thousand ways.

In a discussion with Meher Baba, any topic can become an avenue to the Truth. It is very interesting to note how he addresses himself to every visitor in a language intelligible to him. The instructions which he gives to the visitor are according to his needs and the general line of his development. He puts himself into the centre of the being of the aspirant and, with full appreciation of his individual perception, leads him on to a wider vision. His teaching excludes nothing and comprehends the whole of life. It is not concerned with *sectarian dogmas* but with *universal* Truth. He imparts not mere words or dead formulæ, but living understanding.

DISCIPLESHIP

Meher Baba gives such beautiful love to those who approach him for spiritual instruction that they are inevitably drawn to him. Wherever he goes, there arises a circle of disciples who feed upon his love and reciprocate it by their love. They feel bound to each other by the common bond of love for him. He is their Master, Friend and Guide. He brings joy into their lives and puts them on the Path; and the disciples love and adore him as Truth-Incarnate.

To be a disciple of a Perfect One never involves the surrender of *the right to think and feel and act for oneself*. It does not mean ceasing to be true to the *inner voice* of the Higher Self within. On the contrary, discipleship of

a Perfect One facilitates the pursuit of that Higher Self. The relation of the Master and the disciple is a relation of reciprocal love. The Master is a Truth-realised Being; and the disciple is a spiritual aspirant for the Truth. The Master's Love for the disciple is therefore Divine; and the love of the disciple for the Master is according to his spiritual development. However, the essence of this relation is on *both sides* constituted by *Love.*

The disciples feel personally drawn to Meher Baba because his love for them is personal. It is not like a wind which blows where it listeth, heedless of the needy, and which gives a temporary delight to the passer-by. It is more like the wings of a bird, who sits and sits on the egg, until by the creative warmth of the wings, the creature inside grows and ultimately breaks its prison. However, *his love is not only personal but also impersonal.* It is impersonal in the sense that it is not at all self-conscious. Like the spontaneous perfume of a flower, it is available to all without distinction.

In ordinary human love, the heart is usually held back or warped by the mind. It is either mixed up with motives or limited by judgment. It is calculating and has an eye on the consequences. And it is given to others after weighing their merits. It is restricted by what we call 'considerations'. There is diminution in the overflow of such love owing to the domination of the mind on the heart. And the individual concerned feels within himself a sense of limitation, which is due to inward emptiness.

In the case of a Perfect One, the mind and the heart do not function *against* one another but *with* one another. The harmonious functioning of the two facilitates the release of Love Divine, which springs from Truth-consciousness. As the source of such Love is supra-mental super-consciousness, it cannot be limited by the mind. It blesses the high and the low, the sinner and the saint alike. It is not

caught up in the distinctions of *duality*. It is pure because it is untainted by any worldly considerations; and because it is pure, it is unlimited and free. It is an overflow from inward completeness. It is infinite and it flows in measureless abundance towards all who open themselves to it.

Because of his perfect Love, Meher Baba becomes all-in-all to his devotees. It has been said of Jesus of Nazareth that he was One *"Whom but to know is to adore"*. That is also true of the Beloved Master. There is hardly a soul, who does not love the manifestation of Perfection when he sees it. And loving the Beloved Master is an intense experience. It is not like other fleeting passions that last only for a short time. It grips the entire personality of the devotee and consumes all the dross therein. *In the intensity of that love, the ego, like a piece of camphor which is aflame, becomes thinner and thinner until it completely vanishes.* And this intense love of the devotee is sustained by the Beloved Master himself who makes him the recipient of his ever-renewing and inexhaustible Love Divine.

It is a unique experience to be in the midst of Meher Baba's disciples. Their great delight is to share their spiritual experiences with one another. They are never tired of speaking about him. Like the memory of the morning sun, he dwells in their hearts. So, when they meet one another, their thoughts naturally turn to him. And in many a verse they pour forth their devotion to him.

Some disciples, on whom the Beloved Master's Grace descends, find great happiness in meditating on him.*

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* On many problems concerning *meditation*, a flood of light will be thrown by the following Questions and Answers, constituting a very instructive discussion, which I was privileged to have with Meher Baba at Porto Fino Mare (Italy) :—

Q. In meditation, it is necessary to control the mind; and this requires the use of force. However, the mind cannot be expected to find out the Truth unless it functions freely. How then can we justify meditation?

When such a disciple is alone, his thought spontaneously turns to the Master. Every time he thinks of him, he fills his mind. Nor is it merely the mind which is thus occupied in thinking about him. The heart also is simultaneously drawn towards him. Rather, it is the heart which leads the mind. The mind therefore has to make no effort in meditating upon him. Because of love, the mind dwells upon the Master with joy as on a thing of sublime beauty. In thinking of him, therefore, the mind and the heart function together and harmoniously.

It is just this *harmonious* functioning of the mind and the heart, which the aspirant usually finds difficult to attain. There are some people who are all mind; and their capacity for feeling is very slight. In them, the mind has a tendency to oppress the heart. If there is any uprush of a noble emotion or self-giving love, the mind immediately represses it with the help of some doctrine or theory and the heart is again dried up. On the other hand, there are others in whom the heart is more developed than the mind. These, on the whole, tread upon a ground which is much safer.

For spiritual perfection, however, a merely unorganised and undirected mass of emotion is not enough. Such a

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A. I attach more importance to *love and work* than to *meditation*. If you love a person, you *naturally and spontaneously* think about him. There is no question of forcing the mind in such meditation.

Q. This type of flowing and spontaneous meditation is, of course, very beautiful and needs no justification. But, why do some systems emphasise the need for concentrating upon some single form?

A. If you concentrate upon anything intensely, it shatters the whole structure of *sanskaras*, so that their chains become loose.

Q. How are we to reconcile love for all life with the love for the Master?

A. If any one loves *any* body, that love ultimately comes to *me*, because I am there.

mass of emotion often blinds the mind, and creates confusion and inner conflict. It is like a great thunder-storm which has immense power, but which cannot be made serviceable for constructive purposes. Therefore, in the complete absence of mentality, heart cannot lead to emancipation. However, with most people, the real difficulty is not that they lack intellectual perception of values, but that their hearts are empty. They are like splendidly-built lakes which are without water.

It is true that a perfect lake needs to have not only plenty of water but also well-defined sides. But if we have only well-defined sides and no living spring of water, we cannot get a lake. If we store from outside a limited quantity of water, it will stagnate in the course of time; but if we have a living spring of water, it is much easier to construct a lake, which has plenty of fresh water in all the seasons.

In the same way, it is comparatively easy for a person, who has intense love, to refine and direct it with the help of his discriminative intellect. In this case, the heart warms up his head and uses it to secure the perfection and the harmony of emotions. We thus find that for spiritual perfection, we need to have a *balance between reason and love*. As Meher Baba puts it, "the head and the heart must be united; intellect and feeling must be balanced."[1] If they function together, there is no inner conflict. Then there is only a Peace, born of poise—the poise of understanding and love. But of these two, *love is more fundamental*. It is for this reason that Meher Baba's appeal is primarily to the heart. He, however, not only awakens in it the spring of love but also directs it.

The aspirant, who meditates on the Master, finds that his mind and heart are gradually harmonised. As the

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1 *Questions and Answers*, p. 43.

Beloved is always with him in his mind and heart, he experiences infinite joy and peace. No more for him is there any problem of happiness, for neither time nor space can separate him from his Beloved.

THE ASPIRANT

True discipleship means the entering of the Path. At this stage, man becomes an aspirant. We can adequately understand the full significance of this step only if we know the general psychological features of the mental life of man.

The mental life of the ordinary man may be divided into two parts:—(1) the conscious and (2) the sub-conscious (or the unconscious). Every experience through which the conscious mind goes, leaves behind it some trace or *impression* in the sub-conscious mind. These impressions are sometimes referred to as *dispositions*, because the mind becomes particularly susceptible to similar experiences. Not only does the mind thus become exposed to similar experiences, but it has an active tendency to utilize its environment for getting similar experiences. When such dispositions come to be organised in a particular way and are directed towards some specific type of objects, we get what is known as a *'complex'*. The sub-conscious mind is a store-house of all such dispositions or complexes. The dispositions and complexes have often been referred to as *sanskaras*. And what we call man's *temperament* is a cumulative result of such sanskaras.

The relation which sanskaras have to the conscious mind is twofold:—(1) They originate in conscious experience and continue to feed on conscious experience; and (2) they are constantly competing for gaining ascendency over the conscious mind, in order to direct and control the stream of consciousness. The sanskaras can bring about

a change in the course of consciousness, as it were, from behind the screen. The conscious mind thus has a double relation to the sub-conscious mind. On the one hand, conscious experience creates fresh dispositions or modifies the old ones. On the other hand, the dispositions have a tendency to impel the mind to seek such experiences as will feed them.

The sub-conscious mind of the ordinary person contains within it dispositions of different types, *e.g.,* the dispositions of love, hate, greed, craving, fear, jealousy, etc. And naturally there are *reverberations of this chaos in the conscious mind.* As each disposition seeks the possession of the conscious mind and as these dispositions are often chaotic, the conscious mind experiences many conflicts and oscillations.

Ordinarily, a man is at the mercy of his sub-conscious mind. He thinks, feels and acts as he is *impelled* to think, feel and act by the dispositions existing in his sub-conscious store-house. He does not think, feel, or act *intelligently, i.e.,* with an unfettered mind. However, in every man's life, there comes a time when he determines not to allow himself to drift aimlessly on the river of life, driven hither and thither by the dispositions; and he decides to obtain *constructive control* over his sub-conscious mind in order to be able to direct his personality towards the Supreme End of life. When the person arrives at this stage, he might be said to have become a spiritual aspirant. He may be a theist or an atheist; he may or may not belong to some organized religion; he may be a Hindu, a Christian, a Mohamedan, a Buddhist or a Zoroastrian by faith; or he may be none of these. But, in so far as he has decided to attain *self-mastery* by finding and realising the *true meaning of life,* he is a spiritual aspirant. He may or may not have any true or complete knowledge of the Highest, which he is seeking and his ideas about it might be vague

and even erroneous. But if he is seeking the Truth sincerely and with all his being, he must be called a spiritual aspirant.

Every person, however, has his own approach to the Truth. Every individual has "*to create and choose the path*". The path is dependent upon his temperament and is determined by "the total effect or momentum of impressions", acquired by the individual in previous lives.[2] In the world of persons, we cannot *mechanically* apply any universal laws. All the so-called laws of guidance are only abstract generalisations based upon the observation of the spiritual development of individuals. Every individual ought, therefore, to be striving towards the goal which is Liberation, and to which he feels drawn *inwardly*. If he is true to this Inner Urge or nisus, he need not mould his life in conformity with any external laws.

It is, however, quite useful to note certain general features which are seen to characterise the lives of the aspirants. The general features characterising the spiritual progress of aspirants are as follows:—

(1) They all aim at finding out the highest value.

(2) And, in order to realise the highest value, they try to attain complete control over the sub-conscious mind.

Complete control over the sub-conscious mind is usually achieved along three lines, which are distinct and yet complimentary. (*i*) From moment to moment, the aspirant tries to live only through such experiences as will *strengthen the good sanskaras* and weed out the bad ones. (*ii*) The aspirant reserves some time for concentration upon the Highest in its *impersonal* aspect, and tries to bring his entire personality in tune with the Infinite One. (*iii*) The aspirant seeks a Truth-realised *Perfect Master*; and having found the Beloved, he surrenders himself to

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[2] *Questions and Answers*, p. 16.

him in full faith and undivided devotion, and lives a life of selfless service.

THE PATH

We shall now turn to the comparative value of the three approaches to *Realisation*:—(*i*) good life, (*ii*) meditation on the Impersonal Truth and (*iii*) love and service of the Master.

Really speaking, these ways are not mutually exclusive. They are not three disconnected ways, nor are they independent of one another. They are very closely related and have a direct bearing upon one another. In fact, they may be said to be *three aspects of the one Path.*

With regard to the first aspect of the Path, it will be well to remember that the aspirant does not select experiences *for the sake of* cultivating good sanskaras. That would be a motive rooted in self and will tend to bind him. He lives a perfect and a harmonious life for *its own sake, i.e.,* because it expresses the highest and the true value which he has begun to perceive. On this line, there is *no division between meditation and action.* The two become one.

The second point in connection with this aspect of the Path is that although a distinction has to be drawn between good and bad sanskaras, this distinction is not based merely on *tradition.* Nor is this distinction ultimate from the spiritual point of view, which transcends all ethical distinctions and is *beyond the opposites* of good and bad. Truly speaking the whole world is a manifestation of the Divine Spirit and human nature which is a part of this manifestation, cannot have within it anything which is an undiluted evil. *The evil act is a reaching out towards the good in an ignorant manner.* The distinction between good and bad is, therefore, only

provisional and relative and not ultimate. The liberated man is freed from *all* sanskaras—good as well as bad. But usually, a person has to go from bad to good before he can go beyond both. As Meher Baba once put it, the aspirant must go *"from good to God"*.

The second aspect of the Path, consists of meditation on the Impersonal Truth. There are a number of difficulties and pitfalls in this approach to the Truth. First of all, the Impersonal Truth, which is supramental, cannot be an object of our mind. And idea, which we form about it from our state of bondage and ignorance, is bound to be inadequate. Far less possible is it, therefore, to meditate upon it. Secondly, even when the aspirant believes that he is meditating on the Impersonal Truth, he is really having some verbal image (word) in the mind, as an object of meditation. He is meditating on a *form* and not upon the Truth which is *beyond* all forms. It is true that the Truth is also *in* the forms; and the form can serve as a symbol signifying the Truth, which is all-pervading and yet transcendent. But from this point of view of the *symbolical function* of the form, a merely verbal image has far less claims to be the object of meditation than the form of Truth-realised being or a Perfect Master. For, in this case, the form is a revelation of the Truth and is best suited for being a vehicle of that understanding which is characteristic of Truth-consciousness.

This brings us to the third aspect of the Path—love for a Perfect Master. This is *saguna bhakti*. This approach is easier than the second approach which *directly* aims at the Impersonal Truth. *The Path of love for the Perfect One brings into play the heart as well as the mind, and leads to the rapid dissolution of the ego* which is the source of all ignorance. If it is pursued with understanding, it finally leads to the realisation of the Truth. There is need

for understanding, because the aspirant is likely to imagine that the Master is nothing more than the single form which he is accustomed to see with his eyes. In Truth, the Master is *one with all life.*

To understand the Master *as he is* the aspirant must ultimately rise to his level. He can so rise through intense love, provided he knows from the beginning that the Master *is* the Truth and that he is much more than a form. I remember Meher Baba explaining with great care that when he says that the aspirant will ultimately come to him, he does not mean the *particular form,* but the *Life Universal.* The Master never identifies himself with the 'I' or with a limited form and he merely *uses* the form to reveal the Truth, which he knows himself to be.

If the aspirant, therefore, follows this third approach intelligently, he sees *everything in the Master* and *the Master in everything.* He does not set up an *antithesis* between the Master and the rest of life. Such an antithesis is based upon an incomplete understanding of the Truth-consciousness in which the Master continually dwells. If the aspirant, therefore, loves and tries to understand and *realise* the Master, he attains the goal very rapidly.

On this line, meditation becomes spontaneous because it is inspired by love. And *meditation has no value unless it is spontaneous.* As Meher Baba once brought to my notice, the highest state of consciousness is called *Sahaja Samadhi* or spontaneous meditation. From this point of view, this third approach of the love for a Perfect Master can hardly be called a Path, because, towards the end, it actually *becomes* the Goal. *The lover realises his unity with the Beloved who is Truth.*

THE INFINITE ONE

The last two chapters have been concerned with the various aspects of the Path. But we cannot fully understand the Path without having a glimpse into the source and the goal of life. Human beings, as a rule, see only a *section* of the river of life and the major part of the river is hidden from our sight on both sides. Most men are content with an unexamined life, a life of discord which is due to the play of conflicting motives. For them, life is not a search for some eternal significance; it consists in experiencing joys and sufferings as they come and go. But there are others who try to *understand* life. And this involves an inquiry into the relation between man and the universe. I shall therefore give in a broad outline the general metaphysical background, which is present in the writings and the Teachings of Meher Baba.

The purpose of the entire creation is that the Infinite One (which is the sole Eternal Reality) should *consciously* enjoy its own divinity. It is for this reason that the Unmanifest becomes manifest and the Formless assumes forms. In the "Beyond State", the Infinite is "not bound by any qualities".[3] It is neither One nor Many, neither Impersonal nor Personal. It is *beyond all the categories of thought.* If, however, we do think of it, it would be a mistake to think of it as not being Impersonal or Personal. *As an object of thought and endeavour,* it is best to look upon it as being *both* Impersonal and Personal. The Impersonal aspect "lies beyond the domain of creation"; and the Personal aspect is "the Perfect Master, who, having attained to the *Impersonal* aspect lives in the world and helps others toward Truth".[4] The Creator can hardly be said to be

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[3] *Philosophy and Teachings,* p. 41.

[4] *Questions and Answers,* p. 20.

the personal aspect of the Truth, for he is conscious of being related to the Creation and is not conscious of being "the infinite ocean of Truth that he actually is".[5] Naturally, *the only personal aspect of the Truth is a person who is Truth-realised.*

The Formless assumes forms with a view *to evolve consciousness.* The evolution of consciousness proceeds side by side with the organic evolution of forms, which starts with the most finite gross forms (*e.g.*, the electrons) and through the mineral, vegetable and animal kingdoms ends in the human beings. In human beings, consciousness becomes *self*-consciousness, *i.e.,* it becomes an *Ego* or an individual.

Human form is the most perfect form; and God can be conscious of His own Infinity in a human being. But man identifies himself with the finite 'I' or the ego because of his ignorance, which is due to the creation of sanskaras. The sanskaras are "certain mental impressions of actions, desires and tendencies, bound up with our egoism". They constitute "the veil of darkness that covers one's inner vision" and are "obstacles to illumination".[6] They are partly the *by-product* of the evolution of consciousness (through the lower forms) in its different aspects and are partly *the result of the actions* performed by the individual, either in his previous lives or in this life. They prevent the individual from knowing himself to be God, make him feel limited and are the source of all ignorance.

Organic evolution has thus created centres of consciousness which are burdened by sanskaras or egoism. The problem of *spiritual* evolution is to free these centres of consciousness from egoism. It, therefore, follows that the spiritual evolution does not consist in the attainment or

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[5] *Philosophy and Teachings,* p. 3.

[6] *Questions and Answers,* p. 59.

creation of something new or something outside the consciousness of the individual. It rather consists in *undoing* the effects of the past and realising the God *within*. *The organic evolution creates a plurality of centres of consciousness and the spiritual evolution restores the realisation of the unity of all life to each of these centres of consciousness.* The Truth, however, is neither the product of organic evolution nor the product of spiritual evolution; and it *does not evolve*. It remains "the same Indivisible and Infinite Ocean".[7]

GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS

As we have seen, human beings are caught up in the ego because of the sanskaras. But liberation eventually comes to the individual who constantly strives to dissipate his ignorance by seeking the Inner Light and who, by following it, gradually enters into higher and higher forms of consciousness. The highest state of consciousness is God-consciousness, in which the individual knows himself to be *identical* with God.

For ascending to this highest state of consciousness one has to travel backwards through the *"plane stages"*. The inner planes are usually divided into seven divisions for the sake of convenience; and the traversing of these planes is concomitant with entering into higher forms of consciousness. God-consciousness is the *culmination* of the path.

Ordinary men (in whom the spiritual body is not developed) use three bodies (1) the mental, (2) the subtle and (3) the physical; and corresponding to these three vehicles they experience three states of consciousness (1) Unconsciousness, (2) Sub-consciousness and (3)

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[7] *Philosophy and Teachings*, p. 63.

Waking consciousness. The normal consciousness of the individual is relative to *the clarity and the harmonious functioning* of these three vehicles. But those in whom the spiritual body is fully developed enjoy a *fourth* state of *superconsciousness.* The God-man lives continuously in this state of superconsciousness; and through him "the Divine Will flows inevitably into perfect manifestation".[8]

The individual has to reincarnate again and again until he realises God; and the period of incarnation in the physical body is only a section of the entire life of the soul. The recurring episode of the earthly life is, however, not a mere accident, because *God-realisation is possible only in the physical body* "when consciousness becomes equilibrated in the gross matter".[9]

The state of superconsciousness, which is characteristic of God-realisation, is beyond the imagination of those who are still struggling with their limitations. We are caught up in dark prisons and we can at best have glimpses of the glory of the Sun outside, when an occasional beam pierces into the thickness of our ignorance. If the aspirant has the good fortune to meet a Truth-realised Being, his vision is enlarged; and in the moment of his intense reaching out towards the Infinite, he perceives the Truth which the Master brings. It is of course true that the Beloved is everywhere; but the splendour of His perfection is most clearly revealed in and through a Perfect Master.

The super-conscious state is essentially indescribable. It has to be experienced before one can fully appreciate its intrinsic loveliness. The hidden beauty and riches of the Infinite are all revealed in this state of consciousness; and *the immense mystery of the universe is at last fathomed in this final consummation of life.* God-consciousness is the

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8 *Questions and Answers,* p. 43.
9 *Ibid.,* p. 57.

very goal of creation. "This is," says Meher Baba, in his message to India, "the Christ-Buddha-Krishna-state, the God-man state, in which one attains to perfect manhood and perfect Divinity. To be one with the Source of all Love, Knowledge, Power, Light and Existence is to enjoy Infinite Bliss and feel in harmony with every one and everything."[10]

THE TEACHING OF MEHER BABA

The last chapter has brought out the general nature and the significance of God-consciousness. We have also seen that man is separated from God because of the Ego or self. Thus, the Ego is an obstacle for uniting with the Beloved. Baba's Teaching concerning the manner of overcoming this obstacle can be most conveniently arranged under the following three heads:—

Detachment.—The Ego is "composed of fulfilled and unfulfilled desires;"[11] and the cravings (which thus enter into the constitution of the Ego) are the cause of all suffering. Of such suffering there are two kinds. "When you want a thing," says Baba, "you crave for it until you get it—this is suffering. And when you do get it, you do not experience the happiness you expected—this is disappointment, which is also suffering."[12] Frustration of craving may also lead to anger, worry, etc. Man thus *creates his own suffering* and does not attain the Truth, because he does not give up, *"worldly maya—lust, hate and greed."*[13]

The objects of craving are many. But happiness comes to a man who remains completely detached from all of them. We must be *in* the world but not *of* it. Baba does not

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[10] *Questions and Answers*, p. 45.

[11] *Meher Gazette*, Vol. II, No. 1.

[12] *Questions and Answers*, p. 45.

[13] *Sayings.*

believe in external renunciation. "God, Truth or Ultimate Reality—whatever one may term it—is not to be found only on mountains or in the caves."[14] What we need is not blind repression but intelligent *sublimation* of desires. And this process requires discrimination of values. For example, *sex-drive can be converted into higher forms of spiritual activity only by means of careful discrimination between lust and love.*

Love.—The Ego creates the sense of being separate from the rest of life. *This false idea of separateness is the cause of duality.* The 'I' creates the sense of 'Mine' and 'Thine' and all the various degrees of conflicting claims and loyalties and jealousies. Thus, the completeness of life is shattered by the domination of duality. In order to overcome this sense of duality, we must detach ourselves from the many forms of life and love the Infinite One of which they are all manifestations. "Attachment to the One," says Baba, "and detachment from the many is the key to Freedom and Salvation."[15]

But the love of the Infinite One, in all its forms (and without any sense of duality) can come to the individual only by the continuation and the final *flowering forth* of ordinary *human* love. The way to overcome the Ego is none other than, "to purify and deepen our love, and widen continually the circle of those we love and to render selfless service to humanity to the best of one's ability."[16]

Selflessness.—Love can restore the wholeness of life by annihilating the self, which is the cause of duality. As love becomes selfless and divine, it becomes truly *active.* The essence of love lies in sacrifice. True love, therefore, generates the spirit of service, "where there is no thought

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[14] *Message,* 6th June 1935.

[15] *Sayings.*

[16] *Philosophy and Teachings,* p. 51.

of the self at all". This is *Karma Yoga*. It is action which is creative and yet detached. It is not born of desire but of love. It is without a motive and regardless of results. It does not minister to the self, but is an offering to God. And, the individual does not want to have any credit for himself. It is not his "to think, 'I am doing this' and 'I am doing that', while serving others".[17] But he knows himself to be merely an agent of the Divine Will. By thus mastering this *Supreme Art of living* he realises the Truth; and no more for him are there any 'problems' to solve.

Social Problems.—The Teaching of Meher Baba, thus, gives a solution for all the problems of the *individual*. It also solves the problems of the *multitude*. The problems confronting our age are many. There are the social problems of sex, marriage and morals. There are the political problems of securing the international peace and harmony. And there are the economic problems of food, clothes and houses and the problems concerning the ending of exploitation and class-consciousness.

With the sure insight of the *Seer,* Meher Baba points out that the root cause of all the trouble in these problems lies in *self-interest,* individual and collective, and that this self-interest can be annihilated only through "the atmosphere of *selfless love and universal brotherhood*."[18] Such an atmosphere, however, cannot be created unless humanity is persuaded to give up the false idea of the self as "a limited, separate entity."[19]

True Religion.—The intelligent handling of our individual and social problems is hindered by the *materialism* of our age. Material progress is indeed a great asset to our civilization; but it should not be allowed to make our

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[17] *Philosophy and Teachings*, p. 52.

[18] *Questions and Answers,* p. 45.

[19] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

vision narrow. We need a drastic *revaluation of values* and a complete *reorientation* based upon the perception of the eternal values.

The great Prophets and Seers and World-teachers have appeared in our midst to establish human brotherhood and to reveal the Truth. Thus, Zoroaster and Krishna, Buddha, Christ and Mohammad did all descend to give to us their Teachings. Those, who were ready, understood them. But most followers only built up vast superstructures of religious organisations, which emphasised dogmas, creeds and cults and a number of ceremonies and miracles. In the midst of these inessentials, the Truth, which the Founders brought, came to be utterly neglected or monstrously perverted. According to Meher Baba all this paraphernalia of the "priest-ridden churches" is not only superficial but positively misleading.

Ceremonies and rituals are inessentials, because they tend to become *merely formal* and are usually inspired by the desire for Heaven or the fear of Hell. But Heaven and Hell are really "states of mental peace and torture;"[20] and these states are dependent upon whether our action is in accordance with or in defiance of the Law of Karma. We do not want a religion of the other world but a *Religion of Life.* What, therefore, really matters is not a set of ceremonies or rituals, but the *spirit of love and worship.* In the same way, miracles are far less important than the life of the spirit. Meher Baba does not attach any importance to miracles. His real work is in "Spiritual Healing". And this Miracle of miracles is testified by many to whose embittered souls he has imparted sweetness and music by the magic of his touch and look. Like miracles and ceremonies, Meher Baba regards all beliefs, dogmas and cults as

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[20] *Questions and Answers,* p. 56.

unnecessary. He has *not* come "to establish any *cult, society or organisation,* nor even to establish a new religion."[21] He, however, *does not oppose* any of the existing historical religions, but wants to "revitalise" them by bringing out the essence of true religion, which is "to realise the God within ourselves and in everything we see and meet."[22] And the God which we must thus realise is *not* to be sought *away from life* but *in life itself*. We must realise Him in the creative activities of Art and Science, in Love and Beauty and in our attitude to our fellowmen and to Nature. True spirituality is not concerned with any *part* of life but with life in its *totality,* in all its aspects.

The Teaching of Meher Baba is thus *comprehensive* as well as *profound*. His Teaching is comprehensive because it embraces all the phases of life. He does not reject any values. He only puts them in their proper places in an adequate synthesis. He looks upon life in its wholeness and deals with it in all its aspects; and he helps us to see these aspects in their proper perspective. And his Teaching is profound because he shows all the different values of life as being related to the "One Indivisible Infinity existing in every phase of life."[23]

CONCLUSION

As we have seen, the Teaching of Meher Baba is profound and comprehensive. He has not written much, but he prefers to impart his Teachings *directly* to the aspirants. All the great Prophets and Seers of the world have preferred to address themselves to the people personally. In spiritual

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21 *Meher Gazette,* Vol. II, No. 2.
22 *Questions and Answers,* p. 35.
23 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

instruction, what matters is not so much the words as the experience of the Teacher. Meher Baba not only solves the intellectual problems of the inquirer, by removing with great gentleness every doubt which may happen to cloud his mind, but he also imparts to him the perception of the Truth, which he brings. This is his real mission. He has come *"not to teach"* but *"to awaken"*.

As a result of coming into personal contact with Meher Baba, the aspirant experiences a quickening of his life and the widening of his consciousness; and he gets a glimpse of the eternal values. A great sense of Peace descends upon him as he absorbs within himself the Divinity of the Master. In his presence one realises how the God-state is altogether different from the human state of consciousness. And one recognises in him the revelation of that Truth, which really is the object of our search and the destination of our long pilgrimage and which alone will completely satisfy our inmost aspirations.

While travelling along the steep Path that leads to the Truth, the aspirant meets with many a difficulty and has to fight with many a dark power within and without. And there are many occasions when he is likely to feel tired. Time and again, he needs to have a spiritual bath, which will wash away all the dust that gathers on him in the journey. And he also needs to have some spiritual food, which will restore his vigour. This is exactly what the aspirant gets from the Beloved Master. The very presence of Meher Baba is enough to chase away the impurities that might be lurking in his mind. As the aspirant attunes himself to the Master, his mind and heart become *tranquil and clear*. And when he receives his beautiful and life-giving Love, his spirit is refreshed; and he is filled with a new faith and a joyous enthusiasm to press on to the Goal.

PART II

THE JEEWANMUKTA IS ABOVE LAW

THE man in the street has a nebulous and oscillating attitude towards law, because he has not thought about its nature and has not arrived at self-knowledge. There are in him certain selfish and anti-social tendencies as well as a vague perception of the universal goal; and the conflict between these two is usually represented as the conflict between the individual and the law. But the situation is complicated by the fact that the external social law is often created merely by some frozen and blind *tradition,* or by the mechanical application of some rigid and ill-fitting *abstract principle,* or by the chaotic accumulation of complex and unenlightened *expectations of the people at large.* Sometimes, the social law is conducive to the fulfilment of life; and sometimes, it thwarts the spiritual progrese of the individual. This explains why ordinarily the individual has no clearly defined attitude towards law. At times, he respects it; and at times he resents it. Sometimes, he identifies the social law with right actions; and sometimes he looks upon it as a limitation of his own freedom. This dual attitude to law is thus a common feature of the psychology of the 'plain' man.

The place and function of law in the life of ordinary men has to be clearly understood before we can determine its scope. We shall then find that the life and the state of the *Jeewanmukta* belong to a totally different order of being and that it is, therefore, inappropriate to judge his actions and conduct by ordinary standards. The liberated soul is entirely beyond the sphere of law.

If we attribute the sanctity of the law to any external source, its authority becomes arbitrary and it has a tendency

to deprive life of its spontaneity and freedom. If life has any intrinsic value of its own, its law will have to be sought for in life itself. The external law of the legislatures or of the conventions and expectations of society can, therefore, have claims upon the individual only in so far as it reflects objectively the inner law of *reason*. So its significance for the individual is conditional and relative. The same applies to rituals and ceremonies grounded in scriptures or tradition. But the moral law laid down by the inner voice of conscience is believed to have absolute and unconditional claims to the allegiance and obedience of the individual. However, even in the moral sphere, this idea of the moral law applies only to ordinary persons in whom there is division and conflict between the rational and the anti-rational parts of the psyche. Among the philosophers, Kant is the best exponent of this way of looking at the moral law; but even he anticipates the possibility of the Holy Will where the anti-rational part is absent and the idea of enforcing a law is on that account inapplicable.

From the above analysis, it becomes clear that the external social law, as well as the internal moral law, can have use and value only to the imperfect individual who may at times need the pressure of social opinion or potent beliefs (called principles) for guiding his own life effectively. But a person whose mind is illumined and is eternally dwelling in the full effulgence of the light of Truth can have little use for these aids. He may occasionally prefer to be a giver of laws to others for helping them towards the Highest Good, but he himself remains above the domain of law. For him, perfect life is spontaneous and unimpeded expression of what *he is*. *He is a law unto himself*. He does not act according to external standard. He is one with the Ideal or the Goal and is therefore not responsible to any one except himself.

If we go deep into the metaphysical implications of

the idea of law, we find that it requires a world where there are claims and counter claims, loyalties and duties of individuals in respect of each other and which, therefore, presupposes the separate and independent existence of many selves. But *the obligation of a law would be absolute only if the separateness of the finite souls is inviolable.* However, the man who realizes the Truth, goes beyond the domain of duality and multiplicity, and he therefore completely transcends the scope of application of law. If he is one with all, how can he be permanently bound by any commitments to others or by any expectations which others may have? His action and interaction with other individuals in the world will of course be such as will automatically bring the maximum good to those concerned. But he, in his unique state of consciousness, can hardly be expected to fetter his responses by the expectations and the considerations agitating in the minds of those who are still struggling in *Maya*.

Modern research in physics has shown that even in the material world the so-called determinism can best be explained as probable expectations based on averages. But rigid and uniform determinism does not apply to the ultimate constituents of matter. Their behaviour is incapable of being anticipated with exactness. So in the last analysis, indetermination, rather than rigid determinism, is found to be the characteristic feature of the material world. According to modern science, therefore, spontaneity and freedom, *i.e., Lila*[1] *is at the heart of reality*. And, if this applies to the ultimate constituents of matter, it certainly applies to life and particularly to those manifestations of life where it is becoming conscious of itself. In this light, the principle of *Lahar,*[2] which is so strongly pronounced in

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1 Spontaneity and freedom in action.

2 Divine Will. Ordinarily it means whim or vagary.

many of the saints and men of genius can be seen in its right perspective. If any one can exactly anticipate the actions and the moves of a Master, he will have to be a Master himself.

In fact, the creativity of Masters is unbounded and their acts are often a surprise to others. This is not to say that the acts of a Master are without any purpose. They have a purpose, but the purpose of their actions is too deep to be easily grasped by ordinary minds. As the significance of these actions is often entirely beyond the reach of the imagination of ordinary persons, they are likely to look upon them as whims. But this is a mistake. The Master often does not have sufficient time for giving explanation of his moves. Besides, he has, at his hands, a good deal of data and work, the nature of which would not be properly understood by ordinary persons even if he took the trouble to explain it all.

Moreover, what appears as *Lahar* may often be deliberately used by the Master, both as a test and as a training of the disciple. This technique has very good results in the field of spiritual life and it might be almost impossible to secure these results of spiritual value in any other way. One of the most difficult tasks with which the Master finds himself faced, is to help the disciples to free their mind from being too much attached to plans about the future. The perfect man has no desires and therefore is living in the *Eternal Now.* The activity of making plans is, in his case, a part of the outflow of his rich spontaneity of action and is not as in the ordinary man due to any desire to fulfil himself through some results in the future. Thus Lord Krishna says:

"*Na me Parthasti kartavyam trishu lokeshu kinchana,*
Nanavaptamavaptavyam varta eva cha karmani."

"O Partha! In all the three worlds, there is nothing that I must of necessity do. There is nothing that I have not obtained; nor is there anything worth obtaining for me; and yet I live a life of action."

This life of freedom and fullness is utterly different from a life where there is constant craving to get satisfaction through results in the future. If in the human plans there is this element of craving, or expectation of satisfaction, the mind is attached to those plans and is bound by them, even if they are plans about good actions. The liberated man is free from good as well as bad *sanskaras* and is, therefore, completely unattached to good as well as bad actions. *There is no 'must' or 'ought' for him.* Whatever he does is an expression of his sweet and unfettered Will or Grace. But ordinary men and even the aspirants are burdened by anxious plans about the future. Just as the ego can live upon the thought, "I have done this," it can also live upon the thought, "I shall do this, or I am going to do this". The disciples can be helped in dissolving this form of egoism and in remaining detached from all plans about the future only by being required to submit themselves to the *Lahar* of the Master. Then, whatever they do is for the sake of the Master and because *he* wills it and not because they have, in their limited wisdom, decided to do so. As soon as the disciple grasps, in his own limited way, the significance of a plan, he has a tendency to get attached to the work itself, without reference to the Master, and his ego is likely to live upon the thought that he must do it. But if he trains himself to be ready to give up all his undertakings and expectations at the order of the Master, *the Lahar, which cannot be predicted, becomes a potent means of keeping the disciple free from many sanskaras and even of actually freeing him from many sanskaras.* These considerations may help the readers to see in their right perspective, many of the moves of Meher Baba, which on the first view, might seem incomprehensible and baffling. His moves do not spring from any compulsions, inner or outer; they are the expressions of his Grace, which is beyond the sphere of law.

THE NEED FOR A MASTER

THE human soul finds itself in a world which it does not completely understand and where it does not recognize its own true nature. It identifies itself with the limited individuality or finite consciousness; and its actions are impelled by *sanskaras* which use the mind for finding expression and fulfilment. In life, the ego tries to adjust itself to the world, or adapt the world to itself. But as long as the mind is clouded by past *sanskaras,* its actions are not free; and they inevitably lead to conflict, chaos and suffering. Human suffering would thus have been endless had it not been for the help of the Perfect Masters who have *Self-knowledge* and are free.

The Perfect Master imparts light to the groping soul and gives a new direction to life. The aspirants who have met Meher Baba are always conscious of a reorientation of life; for, his contact effects the *entire overhauling and reconstruction of the mind.* Such complete overhauling and reconstitution of the mind is indispensable for right search. There cannot be right search without some perception of the goal; and there cannot be perception of the goal, unless there is profound disturbance in the normal limited outlook, which, owing to previous *sanskaras,* is false and binding.

Some aspirants rely solely on their *conscience* for guidance in life. But the conscience of most persons is often just a collection of prejudices and opinions which they absorb from the social atmosphere; it is at best based on experience and is therefore *sanskaric,* limited and binding; and even where the aspirant has begun to think for himself, he is likely to come to wrong conclusions owing to the operation of *sanskaras.* He may embrace a false view firmly and cling to self-delusion without knowing his error; and he may take very long to realize his limitations unless he

is lifted out of his groove by the Grace of the Master. It is true that the Source of Light is within; but as it is hidden by the cloud of *sanskaras,* the Light does not always come through in its purity. It is, therefore, not sufficiently effective in guiding human search. On the other hand, the Light coming from the Master comes through an unclouded mind; and when it is received by the finite consciousness of the soul, it helps the soul to bring out the Light from within.

The awakening, which many aspirants experience by coming into contact with Meher Baba is due to the divine touch, which he gives to the inner Self. It is a mistake to imagine that the Master works only from without in a semi-mechanical fashion. *Through the Divine Love which Meher Baba pours into the aspirant, he gets into his heart and works from there as an abiding source of happiness and inspiration.* The effect of the contact with the Master, however, depends also upon the receptivity of the aspirant. Spiritual progress is most rapid where the soul, which is ready through its past efforts, has the good fortune to get the help of a Perfect Master.

There are some, who sincerely believe that a Master is not necessary for spiritual life. This view is erroneous and overlooks the significance of many ordinary facts concerning the process of learning. A child has to be taught how to walk, talk, dress, read and write before it learns to do these things for itself. Even for adults, it is always easier to assimilate the truths imparted by others than to discover and realize them independently. This will be seen in practical life as well as in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. It took many years of work for a scientific genius like Newton to discover and establish the Law of Gravitation; but to-day even ordinary persons can understand it in much less time. In the same way, it took a mechanical genius to invent a motor engine; but even ordinary persons

can understand and control its mechanism when it is explained to them. In short, human progress in the various departments of life would have been considerably less, had it not been for the capacity of man to profit by the experience and understanding of others. The same is true of spiritual life.

The need for a Master is even greater in spiritual life, because ordinary man is at the mercy of ever increasing *sanskaras*. His ignorance leads to ignorant actions which further fortify ignorance. For example, if he develops a craving for wine or greed for money, with the lapse of time, he becomes more and more a slave of his desire and clings more and more firmly to the wrong belief that it is absolutely necessary for his happiness. Attachment makes him feel helpless and dependent upon external circumstances.

It is true that the suffering which a man experiences, as a result of his ignorant actions, often provokes thinking and compels him to revalue everything in a new Light. But the impact of the suffering is not in itself sufficient to lead him to wisdom, because the mind has a general tendency to attribute all suffering to unfavourable circumstances rather than to its own assumptions. Man, therefore, needs guidance from the Master, who can effectively impress upon him the true cause of suffering, which is wrong valuation. When he is thus turned towards the Light and yearns with all his heart for the Light, every experience clarifies and strengthens his spiritual intuitions. The Master, however, is necessary not only to initiate the aspirant into the Path but also to secure his steady progress; for the aspirant is likely to slip and fall into the abyss of ignorance again, unless he is constantly warned and encouraged by the Master.

The greatest hindrance in spiritual life is egoism which increases not only through bad actions but also through good actions. No amount of 'thinking' is in itself sufficient

to purify consciousness from egoism. *Just as a man cannot stand upon his own shoulders, the ego cannot annihilate itself.* It feeds upon everything it does and grows through its actions and achievements. Complete self-surrender is the only way to oust the ego from consciousness. *The Master alone can, by using the various circumstances of life, lift from the mind of the aspirant the woeful burden of egoism.* The aspirant cannot independently shake it off even if he wants to.

With the help of the Master the aspirant can not only eliminate egoism but also develop divine qualities. The spirit of love and selfless service, which Meher Baba awakens, is due to his divine intervention and the supreme insight, which he has in the working of the human mind. The impersonal path of seeking the abstract Truth, or the unmanifest, is bound to be mainly intellectual and, therefore, does not provide sufficiently for the development of the heart or the perfection of activity. *The Path of the Master, however, is rich with potentialities for the expression of love and action.* And, further, the aspirant can always depend upon the knowledge, love and power of the Master, who sees him safely through the pitfalls and the dangers of the Path.

In spiritual life, teaching can in no way be an adequate substitute for the Teacher. Teaching has undoubtedly an important function in spiritual life; but it cannot give the same inspiration as personal contact with the Master. A man can construct his ideal out of what he has read in the books; but it can hardly affect his life seriously. And even when the ideal is born of his own speculation, it is bound to be deficient owing to the limitations of his experience. Further, though the ideal may seem to him as being reasonable, it still comes to him as a mere possibility, and therefore, remains ineffective. It may appeal to him as desirable, but he continues to doubt its actual practicability in life.

In fact, to set up a conception as an ideal often brings about more or less permanent despair about realizing it in practical life. The ideal appeals to the imagination as an inviting possibility. But the aspirant who relies only on himself for realizing the possibility also knows, or will discover, his own weakness, and is, therefore, unable to have sufficient self-confidence. The ideal is for him an intellectual theory or merely the hope of imagination, while his limitations are a matter of experience in everyday life. He is, therefore, likely to be overpowered by these limitations and come to look upon the distance between the actuality and the ideal as unbridgable. This means acquiescence in the actual and ends in the cessation of serious endeavour, although the aspirant may continue to harbour idle longing for the ideal.

On the other hand, contact with a Perfect Master inspires *confidence,* since, in him, the idea of the imagination is apprehended not as a theoretical possibility but as a realized actuality. The speculative ideal is only a construction of ideas, while the Master represents Reality and therefore has all the Infinite Powers of the life-force at his disposal. *Contact with Meher Baba not only keeps spiritual aspiration alive and intense, but inspires active effort, because he is the ideal which has become Real. Knowledge of the reality of the Ideal is a much greater stimulus than a vague hope.*

For spiritual transformation, the help of the Master is thus much more important than mere speculation or the reading of scriptures. The doctrine that the Light can only come from within and not from the Master presupposes the "dire heresy of separateness". The division of within and without is based upon duality, which is created by the false identification with the body. The Master is and knows himself to be that Unity of life in which there is no division. To externalize the Master is, therefore, to identify him

falsely with nothing but the form. *Really speaking, the Master is neither merely internal nor merely external—but both.* He is the all-pervading Divine Life. He takes form only in order to help aspirants towards the goal of Truth-consciousness. By meditating on the Master, the aspirant is transformed into his likeness, because the mind becomes like that which it contemplates. And just as one torch sets aflame another torch, the Light which the Master brings imparts Truth to the seeker.

THE CONCEPT OF LIBERATION

Analysis of the Concept of Liberation

Liberation in itself seems to be a purely negative idea; but it implies the existence of that which is in some way limited and which can be freed from these limitations. Man knows himself to be finite owing to the many limitations of which he is always conscious. The awareness of limitation or bondage is an everyday fact which no one can deny. But this consciousness of limitation is possible only if there is some objective towards which life is striving. If a person wants to get out of a room, then alone can he have the sense of being imprisoned in that room. If he wants to remain in it, there is no sense of limitation. Most people live under a sense of limitation and restriction because of their having certain desires which cannot be fulfilled. The sense of freedom can come only in the successful attainment of some fundamental urge; if it is frustrated there is immediately the sense of limitation.

Liberation and Desires

Had there been only one desire in consciousness, one could have unhesitatingly said that the freedom of consciousness consists in the fulfilment of that desire. However, we actually find in consciousness a host of desires, which often come into conflict with one another. Further, most of these desires are dependent upon external things or circumstances; and the freedom which the soul may have in relation to them is, therefore, not absolute but *contingent.* When there is a conflict, the freedom of soul makes itself felt through choice. But *choice is a process of self-torture,* since the person has to rule out one or more alternative

desires in favour of some particular desire. Thus, in choice, the soul experiences limitation.

The search for absolute freedom, therefore, involves the search for the *ultimate purpose* of the life of the individual —*Parama Purushartha*. This is the *positive* aspect of liberation. This ultimate purpose is hidden by the surging of diverse desires, which dominate the stream of consciousness. However, it is a mistake to think that desires are mere obstacles; for, they can, if intelligently handled, be turned into so many avenues, which *indirectly* lead to the ultimate goal by bringing about multiform experiences and thus creating opportunities for a real understanding about the *Telos* of life.

Therefore, a purely negative method, which shuns life and its experiences will not lead the individual to the perception or the realization of the goal of life. But if the individual accepts and welcomes experience and digests it through critical understanding, he can come closer to the final fulfilment of life. The capacity of an experience for awakening the individual depends upon how rich and profound it is. The experience, which is most useful in this connection, is the experience of *love*. Mostly, the experience is not strong enough to break down the walls of the prison of consciousness, because it is clouded by different factors like egoism, fear, jealousy or a selfish motive. But if the power of love is freed from these encumbrances, it can lead the individual to the final release and fulfilment.

The Law of Karma

The limitations of consciousness can all be ultimately traced to the effects of past actions (which include thought and feeling), which give a specific shape and character to the temperament of the individual. Just as the flow of the river cuts its own bed, so also, the action of the

individual leaves behind it certain mental traces which not only serve the purpose of recalling the original situations but also operate as dispositions giving a specifically directed momentum to the subsequent mental process. *The bondage of Karma can, in the last analysis, be reduced to unconscious mental habits, which prevent intelligent response to the rapidly changing circumstances.*

It is true that with regard to many *technical* achievements habits conserve a great deal of practical experience and usually save us from the need of fresh efforts for adjustment and co-ordination of responses, for we are there concerned with *recurring problems which repeat themselves with uniformity.* But *mental* habits have a tendency to obstruct true perception of values and also to hinder the release of intelligent response, because every fresh situation in the life of the individual is unique and therefore requires critical thought and unique response.

For the limiting influence of Karma, we have, in abnormal psychology, a good analogue in fixed ideas, which introduce unhealthy rigidity in mental operations. But apart from mechanization of the mind, the mental habits can often limit activity from another point of view also, because most mental habits are due to ignorant and misdirected actions. They, therefore, not only make the mind a rigid and semi-mechanical instrument, but also positively pervert it. *The problem of Liberation is, therefore, the problem of freeing the mind from the limiting influence of past actions.*

Free Will and Freedom

The psychological question with which we are here confronted may be formulated as follows: "Is the mind eternally doomed to operate under the yoke of its own past, or is there any way for emancipating it from that influence?" It is futile to expect any clue from the solutions offered

in connection with the problem of *free will,* where a reconciliation between determinists and libertarians is effected by defining freedom as self-determination. In such solutions, the self is tacitly identified with its character and the operation of what is called the *whole self* can hardly be distinguished from the collective result of totality of dispositions.

The cardinal fallacy of such solutions lies (1) in looking upon the individual as having no being other than his psychological products which constitute his empirical self, and (2) in hastily forming a theory of human personality without thorough investigation into the nature of ultimate values or the final purpose of human existence. Having accepted narrow empiricism, such theories have to be content with the *formal* freedom of self-determination, which secures internal harmony but fails to assure the realization of supreme values. It is, therfore, not surprising that they ignore the other important condition of *positively significant freedom,* which has been beautifully expressed by Christ when He said: "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make ye free".

Conditions of Liberation

The chief condition of freedom is that the entire personality should be illuminated by a comprehensive and unifying ideal. In the last analysis, it will be found that nothing short of Infinity can bring real fulfilment to human personality. Whatever is fragmentary or temporary must leave the soul dissatisfied. Even the ideal of Infinity merely intensifies human discontent, so long as it is objectified and apprehended as something which may be realized in future, for it intensifies, the awareness of existing limitations. True freedom requires the transcendence of all limitations (or the bonds of *Karma*) and *the realization of one's own Infinity here and now.*

During the process of transcending limitations, it is however necessary that the mind should be wholly centred upon the realization of the Infinite. So long as the mind is caught up in the temporal process, owing to various desires, it is neither possible nor desirable to avoid the creation and the pursuit of the Ideal. And if the ideal is as vast as Infinity, it releases in the individual that power which enables him to transcend his spiritual limitations.

After perceiving the ultimate goal, the life-force which has so far been forging for one's self the multifarious chains of trivial desires is withdrawn from all dissipating channels; and it comes to be released in a manner which will in no way create a sense of limitations. Modern *psycho-analysis* has not yet fully recognized (1) the possibility of completely *annulling* the effects of past experiences and actions (2) and the possibility of *complete sublimation of the libido*. But this is largely due to its being exclusively based upon abnormal data and its somewhat ungenerous attitude towards the entire range of supernormal experiences.

The Cause of Limitation

The most essential requirement of Liberation is that *the individual should be able to step outside his limiting personality in the sense that his vision is no longer clouded by exclusive concentration of interest in his own self*. The limitations of consciousness are ultimately rooted in some kind of deep-rooted ignorance about the place and function of the individual in the totality of life. The understanding of life is perverted by the fact that the individual has a tendency to judge everything and to react to it from the point of view of the *ego*. The ego creates duality and all the complications of duality. It divides life into fractions and destroys its harmony and integrity. The individual, therefore, constantly lives in a sense of conflict, frustration and limitations. But if through intense love and understand-

ing, the individual succeeds in dropping the idea of his being separate from life, he breaks through his limitations and is united with the one indivisible Reality.

Liberation and Extinction

Those thinkers, who look upon Liberation as total extinction of life and consciousness have certainly misunderstood its true nature. This view is sometimes attributed to Lord Buddha; but there is evidence to believe that he looks upon *Nirvana* as a positive state of consciousness. Extinction, as such, can hardly have any fascination for the individual. For those, who cannot think of any other life than the life of the ego, Liberation may look like total extinction; but, in fact, it is an initiation into the Life Eternal, for the individual is then united with the Infinite Reality.

Even the positive conception of Liberation, however, differs according to whether one looks upon the Ultimate Reality as being personal or impersonal.

Saguna Mukti

The worshippers of a personal God believe in three kinds of Liberation:

(1) *Salokya,* or residing in the world of the God worshipped,

(2) *Samipya,* or living in close proximity with Him, and

(3) *Sarupya,* or becoming like Him in nature and form.

Liberation is here looked upon as a blissful state of existence in some supersensible world; and this kind of ideal can only appeal to few persons, since, for most persons, the existence of the other world is either a theory or a matter of faith. Further, along this view, all hope of fulfilment comes to be centred upon *life after death*; and the present

mundane life of man tends to be deprived of all intrinsic significance, since it is regarded as being merely a period of preparation for the life to come. It will also be seen that all these forms of *Saguna Mukti* consist of *varying degrees of companionship of God.* But in so far as they all equally posit irreducible dualism between God and man, they do not do full justice to man's aspiration for Infinity.

Nirguna Mukti

The fourth form of *Mukti,* which is called *Sayujya,* is, therefore, looked upon as the highest form of Liberation, since it consists in becoming one with the Ultimate Reality. The duality of personal relationship is here superseded by the realization of supra-relational identity between man and the Ultimate Reality. This concept of Liberation appeals to those who look upon the Ultimate Reality as an Impersonal Absolute and who long to be merged in it. This type of *Nirguna Mukti* is not a result of a process whereby the individual becomes what he was not; it is rather a culmination of a process of self-knowledge whereby he realizes fully what he already is, has been and ever will be.[1]

According to Sankara, Liberation involves the complete merging of the individual in the Ultimate Reality, so that he ceases to have any separate existence of his own; but Ramanuja maintains that the individual retains his separate and unique existence, although he comes to have the most intimate relation with the Ultimate Reality. However, even ordinary experiences of love and understanding point

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1 *Atma tu satatam praptah apraptavadavidyaya*
Tannase praptavadbhati swakanthabharanam yatha.
—Sankara's Atmabodha.

"Like the ornament on one's own neck, although eternally obtained, the *Atman* looks like something not yet obtained because of ignorance and like something obtained after its disappearance."

out to a confluence or interpenetration of selves. It seems that, in the state of Liberation, the individual knows himself to be the All-self[2] from the point of view of the *content* consciousness; and he ceases to identify himself with the limited personality. But this articulate self-knowledge of the All-self is explicitly present only in the centre consciousness, which has attained Liberation; and Liberation is *in this sense* purely a *personal* matter.

The paradox is more intelligible to us if we remember the inseparability of the subjective and the objective factors in ordinary knowledge of the finite self. The true function of the subjective factors, which are operative in the centre of consciousness, is to grasp, develop and intellectually appropriate the objective world and not itself as an isolated or self-sufficient centre. However, owing to certain psychological factors like desires, the centre does not function perfectly, and it creates a prison for itself in the form of the 'I' or the ego, on the basis of the bodily existence. Identification with the body is thus responsible for the illusion of separateness. But as the centre of consciousness frees itself from its limiting desires, it goes beyond the artificial division between the subject and the object and realizes the unity of the two. Just as the true function of a mirror is to reflect all other things but not itself, *the real value of the centre of consciousness lies in its capacity to reveal the true nature of Ultimate Reality.* It is egoism which makes it identify itself with a narrow and finite empirical self; but when the ego disappears through right understanding, it knows itself to be identical with the one indivisible Reality.

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2 *Sarvabhutasthamatmanam sarvabhutani catmani*
Ikshate yogayuktma sarvatra samadarsinah.

—The Bhagavadgita, VI, 29.

"The self, harmonized by *yoga,* seeth the Self abiding in all beings and all beings in the Self; everywhere he seeth the same."

In Liberation, the individual transcends duality and there is therefore for him no antithesis between the self and the society. It is equally incapable of 'selfish' and 'altruistic' actions. But this does not necessitate the cessation of all action. In fact, Liberation implies the release of perfect action which springs from a poise of love and understanding. It is not born of desire and is, therefore, not the seeking of some unrealized dream of fulfilment; but *it is at once an expression and a part of an eternally fresh and creatively self-renewing blissful fulfilment,* which is unaffected by the sufferings and the conflicts experienced by the unliberated soul.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LOVE IN HUMAN LIFE

"Thou knowest, love, I know that thou dost know
That I am here more near to thee be,
And knowest that I know thou knowest me;
What means it then that we are sundered so?

If they are true, these hopes that from thee flow,
If it is real, this sweet expectancy,
Break down the wall that stands 'twixt me and thee;
For pain in prison pent hath double woe.

Because in thee I love, O my loved Lord,
What thou best lovest, be not therefore stern:
Souls burn for souls, spirits to spirits cry!
I seek the splendour in thy face stored;
Yet living man that beauty scarce can learn,
And he who fain would find it, first must die."

—*Michelangelo Buonarroti.*

(Translated by J. A. Symonds)

LOVE is of two kinds, human and Divine; and human love in its turn may be conscious or unconscious. At the unconscious state, human love is felt as a powerful attraction which nevertheless remains inarticulate and does not know its own true status, function or significance; and at the conscious stage it is illumined by the knowledge of its own nature and limitations, since its hidden implications are all made explicit by being brought to the surface and converted to a rational philosophy. Michelangelo's poem, quoted above, is a splendid example of an exalted human love, which has become articulate. It expresses, in exquisite manner, the pangs and the hopes of human love which is beginning to be conscious of the conditions of its fruition.

We have in it, human love, which is irrevocably implemented by the understanding born of itself and which is poignantly aware of its destiny and keenly sensitive to its own limitation of duality. *Divine Love, on the other hand, as revealed in a Perfect Master like Meher Baba, is the expression of infinity, which has become fully conscious of itself.*

Love has many stages, and might, for certain purposes, be looked upon as a progressive stream, ultimately pouring itself in that ocean of love which is God. There are two ways of understanding the different stages of love. One is to understand love by reference to the psychic factors, which have been operative in the *past.* This psycho-genetic point of view tries to interpret the higher values in terms of lower values. The modern school of psycho-analysis represents one such attempt. The other more important and more fruitful way of understanding human values is to determine their significance in the light of the many anticipations of the *future.* The first method of envisaging the question is akin to the method followed by the natural sciences; but it is for that very reason not sufficiently adequate in respect of mental happenings, which are essentially forward-looking and purposive. Mental happenings, like the experience of love, have, therefore, to be understood through the other method which interprets the lower values in terms of the higher values and which centres its attention on the ultimate goal, which is being progressively attained through all mental happenings. If it is right to think of man as an evolved animal, it is equally right to think of him as a God-man in the making; and *if it is right to look upon human love as a transformation of sex or ego-centric tendencies, it is equally right to look upon it as a reflection of Divinity.* The results of the application of the first method have, therefore, to be accepted as being only partially true and must be supplemented and even superseded by the results of the second method.

As the higher forms of love are a fuller reflection of the Truth than the lower forms of love, it is not possible for us to understand the higher forms of love by means of our ideas concerning the lower forms of love; but it is possible for us to understand the lower forms of love by means of our ideas concerning the higher forms of love. *The higher forms of love include within them all the really valuable elements in the lower forms of love*; but the lower forms of love do not contain the valuable elements which are present in the higher forms of love. Hence, a person who is not evolved spiritually cannot completely understand the entire significance of the love of a more highly evolved person. If he tries to understand it, he has to depend mostly upon his own experience, which falls short of what he is trying to understand; and, therefore, his understanding of the higher form of love remains imperfect. It is for this reason that Divine Love is unfathomable for all who are still in the stage of struggling with their limitations. But a person who is eternally dwelling in the Divine Love has full comprehension of the human heart where the tree of love is still growing: and this comprehension is unparalleled even by the comprehension which a limited person can have of himself, since he cannot have real insight into his own potentialities for the future.

If we take, as it were, a *cross-section* of human love, and analyse the total psychic context in which it appears, we cannot but fail to notice that human love is often accompanied by various limiting factors like pride, selfishness, possessiveness, desire, jealousy, anxiety and worry. *Love cannot take to wings and soar freely in the infinite sky of consciousness, because it is held up by the strings of ignorance born of separative tendencies.* In fact, modern psycho-analysis seems to emphasize that in most cases of love, there is also lurking in the unconscious an element of hate, which comes to the surface occasionally. This love-hate attitude has been called 'ambivalence'.

Psycho-analysis for the most part accepts hate as an inevitable counterpart of love; but this view does not do full justice to the expulsive and purifying power of love. *Love is the most dynamic power which purges human consciousness of all the grosser elements.* A really sincere and intense love not only represses hate but roots it out. In fact, it annihilates, in the long run, all ego-consciousness, which is the very foundation of its limiting factors like pride, selfishness, possessiveness, desire, jealousy, anxiety or hate. Just as the moth, drawn by the irresistible attraction of the flame, enters it even at the cost of getting itself consumed, the lover, who is drawn by the fascination of the experience of love, gets merged in it *even at the cost of surrendering its separative existence.*

The complex psychic context in which love appears need not however be looked upon as a merely negative factor making no contribution to the development of love. We might as well look upon the soil, in which the seed lodges itself, as being nothing but an encumbrance to the development of the plant. Just as a plant cannot grow without struggling through the enclosing soil, human love cannot attain to full vitality and richness without finding its way through the mazes of limiting factors. The joy of freedom has to be a culmination of a long process of struggling with limitations.

The very limitations of love point out to the beyond, which is limitless. For example, hate which is usually looked upon as essentially opposed to love is itself like love in being intolerant of the separate existence of the other. Hate is an attempt to overcome duality by subordinating or annihilating the other to which the self is opposed: and love is an attempt to overcome duality by losing the self in the life of the Beloved. So, hate which is the limitation of love, nevertheless, accepts, in its own way, the objective of love and thus confirms its own provisional character and

the supremacy of love and its right to infinity. Hate (and its correlates) might be said to be the *negative side of incomplete love,* and it has no being or finality in itself. In fact, it has often been looked upon as a form of love itself. It has been called *Virodh Bhakti* (*i.e.,* love expressing itself as hate). Hate is a sign of latent love and is its harbinger. In this light, Christ's Commandment, 'Love thy enemies', comes to us with fresh significance.

The factors which reinforce the development of love are many. The experience of joy in the presence of the Beloved and the experience of sorrow in his absence both augment and intensify the fire of love. Another factor which inspires and nourishes love is beauty—not abstract beauty but beauty incarnate in forms. As expressed by an American poet, "Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare". Abstract beauty, which is nowhere seen in any real form can hardly be the inspirer of love, excepting perhaps rare types of persons (like Euclid), whose gaze is turned away from concrete forms in search of abstract and universal patterns. But, for ordinary persons, beauty can hardly be a potent inspirer of love, unless it is clothed in matter. Beauty as seen in the material forms is the reflection of divinity and as such never fails to touch the deepest chords of the human heart. The lover, through his æsthetic perception, has a deeper hold on the Truth (as revealed in a form) than a dry and a merely matter of fact person. This explains why, among the devotees of Meher Baba, there are many who have developed along artistic lines. Wrapt in the contemplation of the Beloved, the lover forgets himself in ecstatic love. *Beauty is the spell cast by the Beloved upon the lover, who thereby finds his path of love a joyous enterprise.*

To see things in their truth is to see them with the eye of love. Those who look upon love as a conjurer of illusions and call it blind have hardly known the deeper forms

of love. The view that 'love is blind' leads to the shallow syllogism:

Love is blind.
God is Love.
Therefore God is blind.

The conclusion of this shallow syllogism might be said to be a *reductio ad absurdum* of the false view that 'love is blind'. In fact, true love (which should be distinguished from infatuation) is the insight, which one soul has in the essential nature and worth of another soul. *You have not known a person until you have loved him.* Reason is the reflection of Reality in human intelligence; and love is its reflection in feeling. Reality has to be grasped by means of reason as well as by means of love; and the rational grip over reality would be feeble unless it is reinforced by love. *Love is not only not blind, but is actually insight; and to say that God is love is only another way of saying that God is Truth.*

What Shakespeare has said of mercy also applies to love:

"It blesseth him who gives
And him who takes."

The lover and the beloved have an equal share in the bounty of love. The give and take of love creates strong likes between individuals, who tend to be unified with each other. This results in the *sharing of each other's burden* and co-operative life in temporal as well as spiritual matters. There is no such thing as an exclusive search for the Truth. Our destinies get inextricably interwoven with each other by the give and take of love, so that the progress of one person inevitably means some progress of others who are linked with him in love. This is the law of action and interaction in the unseen realm of inner values; and it is based upon the solidarity and unity of the kingdom of

moral and spiritual ends. Through human love, the veil of separateness becomes thinner and thinner. Genuine love always brings with it the sense of completeness, because it takes us beyond the self into the super-personal realm, where there is an intermingling of personalities. *To dwell in love is to step out of the limiting personality.* When the individual realizes the perfection of human love, he might be said to be ready for being initiated into the final state of Divine Love where there is no duality. *Human love is the equivalent of the Truth in the world of manifestation: and Divine Love is the Truth itself.*

MEHER BABA AND UNIVERSAL RELIGION

WE are living in an age, which is characterised by the intermingling of diverse civilizations and cultures. Most of them find their inspiring spirit in some historical Religion. The historical Religions may, in principle, be divided into two types. Both types of Religion require (1) faith in the existence of something higher than the individual self and (2) the recognition of its claims upon him. But the two types of Religion differ in one important respect. In the first type, this higher principle is looked upon as a perfect and infinite personality or God (as in Christianity). And, in the second type, the higher principle is regarded as being some impersonal goal or law (as in the case of Buddhism). These two types of Religion are also found to intermingle with one another in varying proportions (as in the case of the different folds of Hinduism). Further, both types of Religions require something more than the bare allegiance to this higher principle. They also sanction and require the individual to perform duties towards the great society, of which he is a member.

Along with these types of outlook, which have been our legacy from the past, there is also widely current an outlook, which does not claim to be religious and derives its inspiration from *science* rather than from Religion. It recognises the innumerable sufferings of Humanity and wishes to avoid them by securing co-operative and connected action. It is content to leave heaven and angels to themselves. This outlook has gained such wide popularity because it contains some elements of value from which it derives its vitality. And the future Universal Religion, as anticipated by the teaching of Meher Baba will incorporate in itself the elements of value, which are present not only

in the great historical Religions, but also in this 'scientific' outlook.

Let us first examine the sense in which Universal Religion is possible. Realization of God, which gives the individual a secure basis for an integrated and harmonious life, is purely a personal matter; and it cannot be imposed on the individual through any social institutions. No amount of external institutional instruction can guarantee to the individual the synthesis of values and the poise between reason and love, which it involves. God has to be realised by the individual through an *inner awakening* and an earnest search and effort. Institutions at best can serve as tools for interchange of experience. But God-realization always remains a *personal matter.* All that can be done through social effort is the creation of an atmosphere, which will facilitate such realization. *It cannot be directly made universal.*

In so far as Religion consists of certain dogmas, beliefs, creeds and rituals, it has no potentiality to become universal. This aspect of Religion is directly derived from the diverse traditions, which are peculiar to the different peoples of the world. And the futility of the proselytising propaganda which has been vigorously carried on by the followers of different religions for centuries should be sufficient to convince us of the impossibility to secure for this aspect of Religion universal acceptance. That is why Meher Baba does not attach any importance to dogmas, beliefs, creeds or rituals.

It is neither desirable nor possible for any one historical Religion to become universal by *extirpating* other religions. The universal religion, as foreshadowed in the Teaching of Meher Baba will synthesise and not merely blindly reject, the values of the various historical Religions. The historical Religions are all paths towards the Truth. But the tragedy about their actual functioning has been that they have

tended to become more and more exclusive and thus, in the long run, have denied the universal and comprehensive vision of their Founders. Truth is not an exclusive prerogative of any one Religion and the coming Universal Religion, therefore, cannot take a hostile or patronizing attitude towards any historical Religions. What we require is a more catholic attitude which would, not only tolerate all shades of opinion on religious topic, but which will actively try to understand and *appreciate the diverse points of view.* Religion should not divide man and man, as it has tended to do in the past; but it should, on the contrary, be a cementing power that holds together people of diverse opinions.

Meher Baba does not seek to establish a new sect, thus adding to the number of sects already existing in the world, but is truly comprehensive. In the light of his Teaching, the individual will not live for the self alone nor will he live for any narrow sect. But he will live a life of love which knows no distinctions and he will try to realize the common good not because of any ties of common mythology or a set of rituals but because of a clear *recognition of the unity of all individuals in the infinite life of God. Love for God and love for man* will constitute the animating spirit of the Universal Religion of Meher Baba. It will not derive its inspiration from the shadowy prospects, concerning the other world, but will essentially be a Religion of Life. It will not exclude any of the intrinsic values of life, but will comprehend within its scope all scientific, artistic and cultural pursuits. It will leave every individual completely free to realize God in his own way. The Paths will always differ according to individual temperaments. But each Path will ultimately lead the individual to the Goal which *is* universal, although the realization of that Goal is, as we have seen, always personal.

The Universal Religion of Meher Baba is not comparable to the achievement of a result like the establishment of an

empire. It will not be some definite *event* after the occurrence of which men may again go to sleep. It would merely release the Divine Life and energy which to-day is locked up in most human beings. After this release, life will still go on as ever, renewing itself every moment. It will be truly creative, unoppressed by the frozen past, or by the unknown future. And it will be infinitely rich and full because humanity will have attained to *perpetual youth*. This eternally self-refreshing spirit is the very main spring of the Creative Religion of life, which Meher Baba brings.

The way for the inheritance of this spiritual gift of Meher Baba is, however, beset with innumerable difficulties. The world, as it is to-day, is full of chaos because of warring sections of humanity, which has been divided on the basis of (1) class, (2) nationality, (3) race, (4) religion and (5) culture. We thus find, throughout the structure of the modern world, innumerable pernicious distinctions, which are based upon *economic, social, political and cultural competition*. The only way out of this chaos is to transcend these narrow differences through *Universal Love*. The urgent need for solving this world-problem has impressed itself upon us by the tragic catastrophe of the last Great War and by the present international armed conflicts, which, like a tremendous conflagration, threaten to consume the whole world by its flames. It is time that we begin to reflect upon the causes of this persistent muddle and set ourselves to discover ways of avoiding any such future catastrophes.

In our times, the whole world has really become one. There is economic and spiritual action and reaction between all its parts; and it is impossible to ignore this fact. A nation or a race can no longer be regarded as being a self-sufficient and isolated unit. Our individual and social activities must, therefore, be organised on the basis of co-operation rather than competition. We must put forth our

united efforts for counteracting the old ideas of narrow patriotism and petty loyalties and carry on a vigorous propaganda in favour of the recognition of *the claim which the whole human brotherhood has upon us all.* We can thus create a general sense of international responsibility. The real problem lies in the urgent need for forming intelligent and healthy *world-opinion*; and this is a Herculean task. There will be a need for innumerable organizations and service-leagues, in every part of the globe; and the activities of these organizations will have to be co-ordinated, so as to secure harmonious and effective action, *planned by reason and inspired by love.* There will be a need for setting afoot a number of movements or currents of vitalizing thought, so that, by and by, the whole of humanity will become conscious of its unity as an organic whole. It is true that all the historical Religions have been attempting the same stupendous task. But their efforts have obviously not been crowned with success. The amount of selfless zeal and enthusiasm as well as the unflickering faith in life, which are required for achieving unification of humanity can only come from the inspiration derived from a living Perfect Master, like Meher Baba.

Unification of humanity, however, is not our only problem. We have to attempt much more than this, *viz.*, the *rejuvenation* of the modern world. *The whole of humanity will have to go through a kind of spiritual rebirth in order to inherit the new life, for the dispensation of which the New Avatar of Meher Baba has come.* This spiritual rebirth may be difficult for the older generation, because their minds are burdened by the dead weight of meaningless traditions. Their vision is limited by the social distinctions to which their minds have got accustomed. They have been caught up in grooves; and they have lost the capacity to face the problems of life with a fresh and unbiassed mind. The young men and women are free

from this burden and limitation. They are in a position to face modern problems of life with an attitude, which is both critical and constructive. And if they set themselves to this task in the right spirit, they will conserve all the elements of value, which have been inherited by us from the past and also absorb *the vitalising Gospel of Meher Baba.*

In the present distressing and gloomy atmosphere which envelopes Humanity, *our only hope lies in Meher Baba.* It is true that we are confronted with many volcanic and disruptive forces of mutual fear and hatred, which work for chaos. But nothing is impossible for a generation of young men and women, whose imagination is fired by the vision of the Truth as revealed by Meher Baba. Inspired by the ideal of selfless Service, they can apply their energies to the task of counteracting these forces of disruption. This work is comparable to the action of Ulysses, who got bound in 'Aeol's Bag' all the winds except that which was to take his ship to its destination. We have to promote an outlook, which will not only be consistently pacifist, but will also be positively quickened by the spirit of active love for Humanity as a whole. The ship of Humanity will thus arrive at the completion of its pilgrimage by realizing a Comprehensive and Universal Religion of Life.

MEHER BABA AND THE WORLD CRISIS

MEHER BABA comes to us at a time, when the whole of humanity is passing through one of the darkest periods it has hitherto known. The fate of the whole human race seems to be at stake in the midst of ungovernable forces of greed and hate. The world crisis through which we are going has perhaps no parallel in the entire history of humanity. It is ultimately rooted in deep ignorance concerning spiritual values; and the helplessness of our age is augmented by the fact that there are very few persons, who really *know* where to look for light. Many of those who are learned and who might be expected to give the lead to humanity are themselves fettered by *the new superstitions, which derive their inspiration from science.* Modern science has given us unexpected measure of control over the unknown forces of nature. Being hypnotised by the great successes of science, people are naturally turning to it for Light: and in their enthusiasm for the scientific method, they are sceptical or contemptuous of the *spiritual experience of humanity.*

Science, however, can in no way bring real fulfilment of life, though it has brought certain material comforts and amenities of life. The persons, who happen to be favoured with material prosperity are often the very persons, who suffer from agonising discontent and mental conflict. Material progress is a questionable boon, since it can be and often is turned to work havoc to humanity and destroy all the cherished values of civilisation. Man can use his power over nature for good or for evil; but whether he makes good or bad use of this power will depend upon his spiritual advancement. *Man's future on this earth will be very*

gloomy, unless his spiritual advancement can keep pace with his scientific attainments.

For securing the spiritual advancement of humanity, some people depend upon principles rather than personalities. Principles have surely a great value of their own; but by themselves, they cannot guarantee any spiritual advancement of humanity. There is no dearth of codified principles in our civilisation. Our libraries are full of beautiful enunciations of the highest principles; but we remain where we are in spite of these theoretical principles, because we lack the power to translate them in everyday life. The great strides in spiritual progress, which humanity has made in the past, have never been merely through the enunciation of principles; and the progress which it has, time and again, achieved in the past has always come from the *Avatars and the Prophets, who, in the abundance of their Life in Eternity, released great spiritual energy through personal example and brought about a radical transformation of the human mind by infusing it with new faith, enthusiasm and vision.* Such change in consciousness can only be effected through the inner awakening brought about by the Masters of Wisdom.

In Meher Baba, we have the Avatar of our age, for he not only brings with him the Truth of realisation but has the power of imparting it to others. A man, who is really thirsty, does not want a description of water but wants to drink water for himself; in the same manner, a man who is desperately in search of Light is not content with dry theories and learned guesswork but wants to have the direct experience of final fulfilment. Such *personal experience is always a gift of the Masters,* who have broken through the bonds of time and who are securely grounded in the heart of Eternity. One part of the Mission of Meher Baba is to help men in attaining God-realisation. God-realisation is not a cheap thing of the market; and one

has to be prepared for it through the continued endeavour of innumerable lives. Meher Baba will bestow this highest spiritual treasure on those, who are ready.

Another important part of the Mission of Meher Baba is to help men to establish a real and a lasting brotherhood. The best of our leaders and thinkers have been overtaken by a mood of despair concerning the possibility of co-operative and harmonious working in the economic, cultural and political spheres of life; and they are getting settled in the conviction that there is no real hope for humanity. When the nations are fighting over the frontiers of imagination, it seems futile to dream of a real brotherhood. But Meher Baba has *such indomitable confidence in the future of humanity as can belong only to one, who knows the beginning and the end of the world, whose perception penetrates into the hidden potentialities of life and who can rouse them into creative functioning.*

Real and lasting brotherhood can be attained not by talking of love but by practising it. The most dire need of the world is, therefore, that of real love—not the love of which we read in romantic literature, nor the love which is born of philosophical speculation, but *love which will take stock of realities, which will be selfless and pure, strong and steady, which will know of no corruption or limitation and which will stand the test of practical life.* Such love can never be born of desperate effort; it is a spontaneous unfoldment of the spirit. There are no schools where love can be *taught*; it has to be *caught* from those who have it. Meher Baba through his own example, releases in us an unfailing love and arouses an *unassailable sense for the Unity of all life.*

Meher Baba's method of working for his spiritual cause is strikingly different from the usual method of rushing to the platforms with a programme of lectures. In fact, he does not speak by word of mouth even in private. He has

been observing *complete and unbroken silence since the 10th of July 1925.* (Only when the time is ripe for the spiritual word to be released will he break his silence.) He entered into this long and continued period of silence *after* God-realisation, and therefore, his silence is not of the nature of *sadhana* or *penance.* It is grounded in spiritual reasons connected with the work, which he has to do; and it is certainly very significant in our times, when we find so much psychic energy being dissipated in nothing but volumes of words. We have too much talking and very little practice. We may be sure that in our present crisis, the loudest of speakers would not be able to make himself heard in the midst of the roaring of canons; but *the silence of Meher Baba shall be heard.*

Meher Baba awakens the spirit through direct experience. He appeals to something, which is far deeper than the intellect. Our age is spiritually dwarfed by the weight of learning. *God has to be sought by serious experimenting in the laboratory of the human heart and not through the play of intellect.* The spiritual realities are inaccessible to the intellect alone. Meher Baba's primary appeal, is, therefore, to the *heart.* But he does not despise or ignore the intellect. For communication of ideas he uses an alphabetical board to spell out his thoughts; and through this medium he often gives beautiful and effective explanations about spiritual matters.

Meher Baba does not ask people to leave the world and go to the mountains in search of God. According to him, God can be realised while performing daily duties in the right spirit; and he is himself an example of untiring activity for the spiritual good of humanity. Through his several world-tours, he has already prepared the ground for the work. The chief medium for his work will now be the *Meher Baba Universal Spiritual Centre,* which is being established near the Byramangala Reservoir, two miles from

Bidadi, which is on the Bangalore-Mysore route. Among the many-sided activities of this Universal Centre will be a Spiritual Academy, provision for the transmission of such rare spiritual experiences as have been the privilege of the great mystics and saints of all countries, instruction in meditation and training in selfless and effective service. All these activities will be under the direct guidance of Meher Baba and they will be the early manifestations of a great outpouring of force which will ultimately bring about a spiritual upheaval and regeneration. *By his vision and power as well as by the universality of his irresistible appeal, Meher Baba will make his creative contribution as the World Teacher; and the signs of our age unequivocally point out that he has come just in time to save the world from disaster.*

Meher Baba makes no attempt to found a new religion for achieving his world-task. All the great religions of history, he says, are *revelations of Divinity;* and *what is needed is not a new sect or religion but the direct perception of the Truth* of which the Prophets have spoken. The integral vision, which we so much need, can be imparted through the living example of the Master.

Meher Baba vibrates the Truth. *The Divine Love and the pure blessings, which constantly radiate from him, sink deep in the heart and heal the bruises, which it has received while facing the opposites of life. At his touch, all bitterness of heart is swept away, prejudice melts, narrowness and impurities disappear and the psychic being of man is lifted out of the muddle of ignorance to receive a spiritual tone.* He is constantly performing this *miracle of miracles* of strengthening and gladdening the human heart and filling it with infinite sweetness and unfading joy. He restores to man the spiritual dignity, which is latent in him and elevates his consciousness so as to bring it in tune with the Infinite.

The kind of task, which he effortlessly achieves in the realm of the spirit is, in some ways, like that of Orpheus, the great musician of Ancient Greece. It is said of Orpheus that he used to play such wonderful tunes that while listening to them even the wild animals forgot their ferocity and mingled with the lambs in perfect harmony. When we are confronted by the personal presence of Meher Baba, his spiritual grandeur comes home to us and we lose ourselves in spontaneous adoration; and when we thus forget our very selves, we cannot remember our differences. *He raises us from our mundane plane of differences and shortcomings to the plane of Unity and Completeness*; and when we have once had this new vision of true divinity, we can never completely reconcile ourselves to the old life of pettiness and jealousies. *To meet him is to enter a new life and become a pliant medium for the creative release of Divinity.* We have only to open ourselves to his new dispensation of the Truth and be prepared to inherit the Light which he brings.

MEHER BABA AND THE NEW WORLD CULTURE OF THE FUTURE

By Mrs. Indumati Deshmukh, M.A., B.T.

THE whole world has been going through a crisis. It is faced with innumerable problems. Racial hatred and narrow nationalism, religious fanaticism and blind aggressiveness, worship of gold and economic exploitation—these have been poisoning and perverting the cultural life of humanity for generations together; and the world's most imperative and pressing need is more *light*. In order to meet these forces that tend to create chaos there have naturally come into existence many spiritual movements, which aim at creating order out of this confusion. Our age is, therefore, also an age of spiritual awakening. But as there is a keen rivalry between many spiritual and religious forces, our minds are tossed in the currents and counter-currents of thought. In this critical period of humanity, there is in our midst one person, whose Teaching is destined to restore steadiness to our minds by inculcating the right outlook and establish unity amongst the people of the world, in spite of the differences of sex, nation, creed, religion or culture. He is Meher Baba. He loves all; and his comprehensive philosophy is bound to influence the biggest sphere of humanity.

The modern world-culture has to face the most important problem of synthesising the material and the spiritual aspects of life. Very few persons can avoid going to one extreme or the other. There are those who worship gold and are utterly indifferent to spiritual values. And there are others who try to seek spirituality by running away from life and avoiding its responsibilities. Meher Baba's Teaching on this point helps us to have a balance between these

two extremes. According to him, *every-day life and true spirituality cannot be separated from each other.* If the world-culture is to be sound, it must find a way of uniting the two.

Progress of humanity from the material point of view is not in any way unimportant. If a man is required to waste all his life only in the struggle for maintenance, he can have no time for higher things. Meher Baba advises his disciples to discharge their worldly responsibilities completely. If he finds any disciple neglecting his duties he admonishes him. He teaches that those who can behave properly in every-day life will certainly gain the higher life. And those, who cannot attend well even to the ordinary things of life, can never achieve anything of spirituality.

But at the same time, material achievements cannot be looked upon as ends in themselves. If they are not completely subordinated to spiritual values, they are likely to be used for destructive purposes. Even to-day, many scientific inventions are used in wars for killing each other. The kingdom of eternal harmony and joy can come only through the *spiritualisation of life.* The way to achieve it is not bloodshed but kindness, not war but friendship, not enmity but love.

People have forgotten the true and the lasting values with the result that accumulation of wealth for selfish purposes has been the guiding philosophy of individuals and nations. This type of outlook has created in our social structure pernicious class distinctions. There is a wide gulf between the rich and the poor. The rich are in possession of abundance of wealth, whereas the poor are half-naked and starving; and there is exploitation of the poor and the weak for selfish ends. Our political tangle expressing itself through international rivalry and conflict is also due to collective greed for money and power. Meher Baba, therefore, uncompromisingly denounces all forms of greed,

which is the root cause of all our troubles. But he does not advise the people of the world to give up their worldly pursuits. He only asks them to remain unattached in the midst of worldly pursuits and to *spiritualise* them by subordinating material acquisition to spiritual considerations.

The framework of the economic and political structure of Society must facilitate sound cultural life; and the application of Meher Baba's Teaching concerning brotherhood and love requires thorough reconstruction in these fields. Not only will the basis of the new world-culture of the future be thus entirely transformed, but our very ideas of true culture will change radically in the light of his Teaching. Culture does not consist in possessions or power or academic qualifications. It is a certain attitude to life—*the attitude of love and reason*. Meher Baba emphasises both of these aspects of Divinity equally; and he is himself an inspiring example of a perfect development of love and reason. He is an embodiment of true culture.

The sign of culture is a balanced mind—not the static balance of a lifeless thing, but the *dynamic equilibrium of mind, which manifests itself through the creative response of love and reason to all the incidents of life*. The spiritual man does not shun life if sorrows befall him; nor does he wish to add more years to his life if years shower happiness upon him. He is not moved by the opposites of joys and sorrows, pains and pleasures, but transcends both and enjoys eternal bliss in conscious union with the Divinity within. Some persons have a wrong notion that super-men or spiritually cultured persons go away from the world and that they lead a life of inaction, taking no interest in life. In truth, the super-man is more active than ordinary persons. The common man is engaged in activities concerning his own self; but the super-man has to consider the good of the world and has, therefore, a much wider sphere for his activities. He takes great interest in life and lives a full

life of creative action. He does not trifle with anything; but he does everything with all his being.

For the transformation of our cultural life we naturally look to religion. But unfortunately religion has been often misunderstood with the result that it has deteriorated into sectarianism. Sectarianism makes men fanatically aggressive instead of broadening their minds. Instead of promoting the Truth it leads to the spreading of dogmas. Instead of reconciling the differences among men it accentuates them. Instead of increasing the happiness of man it makes him unhappy and narrow. Thus chaos and the misery in this world is due to the misinterpretation of the true meaning of religion.

Meher Baba preaches *freedom of spiritual culture.* The freedom of the individual in matters concerning spiritual life should not in any way be curtailed by convention or dogma. There are as many diverse paths as there are temperaments. All persons need not accept the same path to Divinity. The basic belief of sectarianism is that there is only one path to realization and that it is binding on everyone. But this philosophy leads only to external conversions and compulsions. Meher Baba expects from us not only tolerance of all religions, but the active attitude of appreciation for the truths, which they reveal. He brings to the forefront the vital truths of all religions and shows them as being identical. In his expositions of the Truth, we find him using the terminology of the Sufis or Vedanta or of the Christian mystics without any sectarian bias. The spirit of tolerance is a very healthy preservative of the uniqueness of individuality. It secures in the cultural life of the world a rich variety instead of dull uniformity. Everyone has his own path to Divinity; and yet the goal of all is the same. Freedom of spiritual culture, therefore, leads to *unity in diversity, a harmony in differences.*

The history of humanity has been a history of blunders.

But humanity has been redeemed again and again by the Masters of Wisdom and Love. Meher Baba brings to the world *a new dispensation of the spiritual Truth*. He has come to promote the life of the spirit, which alone can contribute towards happiness and harmony. If a person has learnt the art of spiritual life, he is bound to express creative culture in all the different spheres of human activities and thus transform entire life by the release of love. Not only by his Teaching but also by the inspiration of his supreme example, Meher Baba helps humanity in its onward march towards Divinity. He sees God in every person and teaches us the fundamental truth of the unity of all life. The Light, which he brings, will lead us towards that Abode of Eternity, which is God and which is the fountain-source of life, creating harmony out of chaos and giving meaning to all the mundane activities of men.

PART III

THE MEETING

My heart yearns
To meet the Beloved.
With eagerness,
It longs for Meher Baba.

Seeing that longing
Of one forlorn,
He comes to me
With steady steps.

He stands still,
Effulgent and radiant
With the splendour
Of holy perfection.

O, for words to sing
Of His transcendent Beauty
Which chases away
All traces of impurity!

* * *

My eyes behold
That Divine Revelation
Of Peace and Holiness,
Love and Insight.

Like a piece of camphor
Sending up a golden flame,
My heart pours its devotion
At His Sacred Feet.

And I am oblivious
Of the entire world,
When he looks at me,
Through windows of
Eternity.

* * *

In that moment,
I feel very small
Through the perception
Of my dark failings.

But His gracious eyes
Which do not chide
Give to me the assurance
Of a Love Divine.

And so my heart
Takes courage to pray:
"Good or bad,
Take me up into You."

And like the moon's rays
Flowing from the blue sky,
In peace-imparting ripples,
His Love Divine engulfs me.

SOME FLOWERS FOR SHRI SADGURU MEHER BABA

Offering

Lost in the wilderness
Of the world,
Not a track, could I see,
Leading the wanderer,
Into the open spaces.
Enveloped in the darkness,
Weary and helpless,
I was on the journey,
Not knowing where to go.
Without a friend,
Without a guide,
I was in the gloom
Of my darkness.

In my loneliness,
You came to me,
Ah! even to me!—
Radiant in the splendour
Of your Beauty,
Speech surpassing,
And gave me
Your Love Divine.
Aflame am I
With a longing
For that Love Divine!
Your Love Divine,
Beautiful and Life-giving,
Illuminating the Path,
Revealing the Truth,
Making my heart,
Break forth in heavenly
music.
Master!
You are the Truth, the Life,
The Goal of my wanderings
Which seemed interminable.
You are the source
Of Grace Divine,
Redeeming the worlds of sin,
And drawing all unto you.

What offering,
Can I bring with me,
In my poverty,
To lay at Your Sacred Feet?
In the emptiness
Of my world,
There is nothing,
Dear! Nothing,
Which is worthy
Of Your Sacred Feet.
Will You, Beloved!
Accept my heart?
Sore as it is,
With afflictions
And impurities,
It is still the shrine
Of my devotion
For Your Sacred Feet.

Unabashed, I seek a shelter
At Your Sacred Feet;
And pray:—
"Be it mine to sing
The Glory
Of Your Love Divine.
Be it mine to serve
Your Sacred Feet.
Let not Maya, or her train,
Prevent the fulfilment
Of my Longing.
In my heart,
Is great longing
For the morning,
When darkness gone,
I may dissolve myself
Into the ocean
Of Your Life Eternal."

Your Love Divine

Like the warm sun
In the freezing cold
Of winter time,
Like the cool breeze,
That fans the face
Of the toiling peasant,
Like the fresh waters,
Of a running brook
In midsummer heat,
Like the sweet perfume
Of a full-blown flower
Is your Love Divine.

Like the gushing winds
Frolicking gaily
On the open seas,
Like the Captain
Of a Liner
Homeward bound,
Like the eagle's
Swift flights
In the star-lit blue,
Like the creative spring
Of life ever-renewing,
Is Your Love Divine.

Like the Pacific,
Joining the continents,
Like the vast expanse
Of our globe,
Like the pervading air
Of the open skies,
Like the infinite spaces,
Is Your Love Divine.

Like the consuming fire
In the tangled woods,
Like the ceaseless showers
On the sun-baked earth,
Like the Polar star
For seas unchartered,
Like the nectar of the Gods,
Is Your Love Divine.

The Avatar

Like the snow-white foam,
That crowns the dancing
Waves of sea,
Like the delicate colours
Of a fresh rain-bow
In the azure blue,
Like the radiant Sun
Rising out of
The molten gold of Dawn,
Like the enchanting tune
From a distant land,
You come from Truth.

Take Me up into You

Like the stars which vanish
In the flooding light
Of the morning Sun,
Like the sun-set rays
Fading into the shades
Of a dark night,
Like the winding river
That pours itself
Into the roaring deep,
Like the song celestial
Melting in deep silence,
Take me up into You.

Longing

O my Beloved!
How shall I
Put into words
My tremendous longing
For Your Love?

Surely without You
This entire world
Is but an empty bubble,
Lasting for a while
And devoid of meaning.

Speechless do I become
When my heart
Is all aflame
With the yearning
For Your Love.

O my Beloved!
For ever be it mine
To be the most humble
Servant and devotee
Of Your Sacred Feet.

The Song of My Heart

Beloved!
You are Perfect.
And I love You!
Oh! I love you!

Will You hearken
To the prayer
Of my heart?
It always sings
But one celestial song
With joy unbounded:

"Love's Grace descending
May our union
Be complete."

THE ONE

I

The All-pervading

You are in the spiral nebulæ
From which come forth a million worlds;
And the entire expanse of the universe
Is but a dot in your Infinite Life.

You are in the glorious sun-set,
And the diverse colours of the Dawn,
In the radiant Sun and the Moon,
And the myriad twinkling stars,

In the swift lightning that descends
From the dark clouds in a thunderstorm,
In the rising peak of a mountain,
And the laughing rollers of the Sea.

II

Evolution

Many are your charming forms
Which come and go at your Will;
And your reign supreme extends
Over birth and growth and death.

You sleep in the mineral kingdom;
In the trees and animals you dream;
In men you go through experiences
To awaken fully in the God-man.

III

Experience

In the hearts of men you dwell
To go through a million joys and sorrows,
A million smiles and tears, hopes and fears,
Gains and pains, unions and partings.

You dwell alike in All,
In the sinner and the saint,
The warriors engaged in fighting,
And the lovers that together rejoice.

IV

Perfect Master

And though your myriad forms
Rise to vanish like the ocean-froth,
You are but One, *without a second*,
Changeless and eternal and infinite.
And when you wish to reveal
To the mankind the Truth,
From the Unmanifest you descend
In the form of a Perfect Master.

MEDITATION

As the rider strong and sturdy
Controls his fiery steed;
So does the seeker of the Truth
Make his wandering mind calm.

As the waters of the ocean
Surge up at the moon's sight;
So does the aspirant's heart
Rise towards the Beloved Master.

As the hunter with his mighty bow
Aiming surely hits his mark;
So does the mind in meditation
Unite with the Self of all.

EMANCIPATION

(A Spiritual Allegory)

The Prisoner

Within the nutritive elements
Inside the shell of an egg,
There arose a crystallised centre
Responsive to the environment.

Like the peeps in the twilight
Of a cloudy day drawing near night,
Was his awareness of his tiny world.
And he knew not the limitless space.

One day, there arose in his mind
A desire to break through his prison.
As a lake ruffled by a breeze,
Was his mind restless with aspiration.

In bitter anguish he cried for freedom;
But too frail was he to break his shell.
In bitter anguish he cried and cried,
As in a wilderness of impregnable solitude.

* * *

The Saviour

There was a mighty bird outside.
Her abode was in the dizzy heights
Of the towering peak of a mountain.
And a pilot of the blue heavens was she.

In the midst of her whirling flights
Round the dizzy heights of the mountain,
She heard that feeble cry of anguish,
Faint as it was with unrelieved despair.

Renouncing the joys of the starry skies,
Like the arrow of a mighty hunter,
Swiftly she descended on the earth,
Drawn by her love for the little one.

Gently she sat upon that egg
With her snow-white wings unfurled,
Warding off the inclemencies of weather,
And giving the warmth of her love.

*　　　*　　　*

Release

Again and again, the little one
Appealed to his friend for freedom.
But the crosser of the skies outside
Knew well the risks of untimely release.

With eager voice, the little one cried,
'I aspire to see you face to face!'
'I am with you, my dear child,'
Whispered the voice of love outside.

For days and nights, the little one
Thought of his friend outside,
Until he grew into her likeness.
Through the love he received and gave.

Then the loved one broke his prison-shell
To spend a few days of mutual happiness.
And, in due time, away they flew together
Beyond the ken of all mortal eyes.

INVOCATION

My Beloved Meher Baba!
Your glorious Incarnation
Is for the uplift
Of all mankind.

You are the harbinger
Of the new spiritual era,
Which will take humanity
To the final Attainment.

Your noble Teaching
Of Love Divine
Is the only hope
Of our complex problems.

May Your Blessings
Be on all mankind!
And may the aspirants
Receive from You the Light!

And may we all
With that Light
As our sure guide
Attain the Highest Truth!

TO THE DESPONDENT

Faith

From the mire in the lake
Arises a snow-white lotus.
From the densest midnight darkness
Comes the radiant morning Sun.
From the clay of the road-side
A charming form the artist makes.
And from our mortal stuff
Is born a being pure and free.

Patience

The mills of God grind slowly;
And Rome was not built in a day.
The peasant toils for months
To reap the abundance of his harvest.
The brave soul wanting the Highest
Must with infinite patience wait.
But why complain? The ages long
A moment are in our life eternal.

TO THE ASPIRANT

Aspiration

Let those, who will,
Aspire to smaller things.
Pitch *your* waggon
To the distant star.

These little vanities
Of pomp and power,
Wealth and fame,
Are all passing things.
Far beyond the world,
Of names and forms,
Is your original home,
The goal of your long sojourn.

* * *

The Mirage

The values of this world,
Which men pursue
With desperate eagerness,
Are all false,
Like the unreal waters
That dance in the mirage.
You may for ages long
Remain immersed
In that deceptive illusion
To find at last
Your inmost soul
More thirsty than before!

* * *

The Gardener

As the diviner scents
The presence of living waters
In the depths of the earth,
So must you learn
To listen in deep silence
To the song of the Infinite.

As the eager gardener
Digs far deep
Below the earth's surface,
Breaking vigorously
The strong layers of rocks
To reach the living waters,
So must you penetrate
The hidden depths
Of your own consciousness,
Breaking through egoism
To discover the Infinite,
Which is within you.

* * *

The Spring

Earnest aspirant!
Then will you find
The perennial spring,
Of the sweet waters
Of Eternal Life
Which ever renews itself.

THE WARRIOR

Despondence

In the battle of life,
Where the house stands
Divided against itself,
There often come moments,
When one is overpowered
By the futility of struggle.

* * *

The Master

But the earnest warrior
Must one day meet
His Beloved Master;
And the vision resplendent
Of his Holy Perfection
Helps him to fight.

* * *

The Fight

He fights to the bitter end
Till the thoughts of hate
And lust and greed vanish,
Till the ego finds
His final death
Without any resurrections.

* * *

Birth and Death

Many births and deaths,
Deaths and births he knows
In his long sojourn.
But in Liberation alone
Finds his true Death
And his true Birth.
For far, beyond the chain
Of births and deaths
He goes to Life Eternal.

* * *

Peace

Then the warrior
Is at last at Peace
With himself and the world;
And he tastes the joy
Of a new harmonious life.
His task is done.

MY COMMANDER

Sweet is the voice
Of my Beloved.
Ah! How sweet!
The Voice of *Silence,*
Which is the source
Of songs melodious.
It does not chide.
But once heard
Must prevail for ever.

From the very Highest
The Supreme Teacher
Speaks to the Innermost,
And having spoken
Rules the heart
Without a reign.

Much have we heard
Of Lord Shri Krishna,
Who played on his flute,
And sent all
Into the ecstacy
Of Love Divine.
But it seemed
Only a myth
Too good to be true,
Until Meher Baba came
To liberate the soul
From all ignorance.

THE SUN AND THE SEED

(A Spiritual Allegory)

There was a time,
When the seed lay buried
Under the layers of dust,
Longing for the Sun.

The Sun too longed
To see the seed;
But many were the folds
Of overhanging clouds.

For days and nights,
The seed thought of the Sun;
Sighed and thought
For days and nights.

Once from the thick clouds
Descended fresh showers;
And the surrounding earth
Began to feed the seed.

Then the buried seed
Struggled and struggled
In the darkness of the earth,
Thinking only of the Sun.

In the course of time,
It emerged in the open
To flower forth in the light.
And the Sun too was bright!

TO MY BELOVED MASTER

Let Me Come

Like the morning Sun
Is Thy fair face
Lit up with the light,
Which radiates joy.

Thy smile serene
Contains within it
The profound understanding
Of this mysterious Life.

Not all the lustre
Of the heavenly stars
Can equal the beauty
Of Thy loving eyes.

O my Beloved!
I love Thee.
Sweet like ambrosia
Is Thy Love!

Like the steady flame,
That flickers not,
My heart doth rise
To Thee in deep devotion.

O my Beloved!
Like the incense
Rising heaven-ward
Let me come to Thee!

* * *

My Heart Rejoiceth

My heart rejoiceth
To hear the song
Of Thy Divine Lips,
For they sing
Of the Immortal Bliss
In the Infinite One.

My heart rejoiceth
To catch the gaze
Of Thy beautiful eyes,
For they speak
Of the Immortal Love
That knows no decay.

* * *

My Secret

Thy Glory is my happiness.
Thy Love is my life.
Thy Holiness is my cleans-
ing.
Thy Grace is my hope.

Thy Beauty is my armour.
Thy Look is my sanction.

Thy Will is my inspiration.
Thy Cause is my mission.

Thy Infinity is my freedom.
Thy Divinity is my ransom.
Thy Wisdom is my guide.
Thy Truth is my goal.

* * *

My Aspiration

Like the soaring
Of the eagle
Is my Aspiration.

My soul yearns

For the Freedom
Of Thy Infinity.

And my being
Seeks the ecstacy
Of Thy Sweet Love.

* * *

Thy Throne

Long have I neglected
Preparing for Thee
The seat of my heart.

Without Thy Grace
The cleansing of my heart
Is a task Herculean.

Let Thy Compassion
Descend in showers
To purify my heart.

And step in Thy Throne—
My devoted heart—
To dwell eternally in me.

My Home

Long have I wandered
In the thorny mazes
Of the shadowy world.

Long have I played
With its vanishing things,
That give delight and pain.

But now my steps
Are homeward bound
Speeding to meet Thee.

Thou art my true Home,
Eternal Abode of Ecstacy.
Let me dwell in Thee.

* * *

The Union

Beloved!
I turn to Thy Face.
My being is charmed
With Thy Beauty.

The spell
Of Thy sweet Love
Is irresistible.

My heart leaps up
In great rapture
To unite with Thee.

Let me dwell in Thee
And Thou in me,
Close in Love.

THE END

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